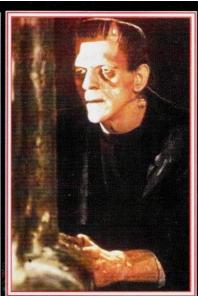
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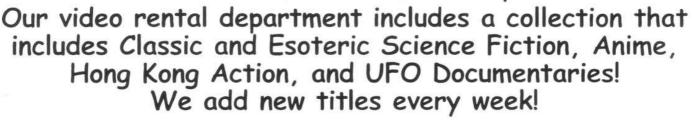


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COVER: HOUSE OF WAX by Bill Chancellor, FRANKENSTEIN (1931)

Scarlet Letters

Scarlet Street #35 is your best issue in a long time. Reading about diverse personalities such as Francis Lederer, Ray Stricklyn, and Stanley Bergerman is a welcome change from the oft-repeated coverage of

Hollywood's genre heroes.

It's a pity that Danny Savello's interview with Francis Lederer is so brief, but perhaps the actor was not up to having a longer conversation. He appeared in many more important films than those described, and costarred with major Hollywood stars such as Ginger Rogers. Also, he played the leading roles in some little known but quite remarkable independent pictures, such as Arthur Ripley's VOICE IN THE WIND, a United Artists release of 1944 which was truly a film noir, and later in his career, in a film called STOLEN IDENTITY that Turhan Bey produced (but did not act in) in Vienna in 1953. In the latter, Lederer played a famous concert pianist who becomes deranged when he suspects his wife of having an affair with another man. Donald Buka and Joan Camden were also in this film, which was directed by Gunther Frisch.

Mr. Lederer errs when he describes THE MADONNA'S SECRET as having been made and released by PRC. It was actually a production of Republic Studios, which also distributed it. There is a misquote in the reference to the three great German film classics of director G.W. Pabst. Lederer starred in PANDORA'S BOX, certainly, opposite Louise Brooks. However, THREE PENNY OPERA and KAMERADSCHAFT were directed by Pabst but Lederer did not appear in them.

In Ray Stricklyn's interview, he mentioned that he appeared on the stage with Bela Lugosi in ARSENIC AND OLD LACE. I'd love to know if it was in the 1947 summer stock production where I first saw Bela on the stage and met him in person. Unfortunately, I no longer have a program with the cast list.

Richard Derr, who acted in TERROR IS A MAN with Francis Lederer, was the juvenile lead in the Broadway stage production of DIAL M FOR MURDER. Jude Law, who is mentioned in Scarlet Street in connection with the remake of PURPLE NOON entitled THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY, also starred on Broadway a few years ago—in the English adaptation of Jean Cocteau's LES PARENTS TERRI-BLES, opposite Karen Black and Eileen Atkins. He played the role taken in the original French film version by Jean Marais, but with a slight difference. In these more permissive times, he was required to play a scene on the stage fullfrontally nude, which would not have been possible in the era when Jean Marais did the movie.

Richard Gordon Gordon Films, Inc. New York, NY While we respectfully disagree that Scarlet Street #35 was our best issue in a very long time—frankly, we think we've been on a roll for about nine years, now—it's always a very great pleasure to hear from Mr. Gordon.

A thousand thanks for the free issues of *Scarlet Street* you supplied for use in my Film Criticism class at the University of North Alabama. The subject under study this semester is "A Cultural History of the Horror Film," and your mag has proved to be an invaluable supplement to David Skal's excellent *The Monster Show*, which I'm also using in the class.

Most exciting, however, is what I have personally seen my students gain from your mag. As most of them are truly discovering classic horror films for the very first time, the variety of subjects and opinions have been the source of much enlightened debate. Such perspectives as identifying gay and lesbian issues in these works have been very appreciated by my gay students in the class, and have been embraced with equal fervor by their classmates.

Offering historical analyses on these favorite films of ours is not that unusual for a mag like *Scarlet Street*. But there is much more to be found between its pages. Whether you agree or disagree, the subject matter in *Scarlet Street* engages my students to analyze, critique, and debate the films we watch in class. And that is my personal litmus test of the relative

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IANE ADAMS



worth of any material that I recommend to my kids. Needless to say, *Scarlet Street* passed that test with flying colors.

So, a big "Thanks!" from me and the students in COM-480 at UNA.

Brooke Perry

Professor of Theatre, Communications and Film

University of North Alabama

And a big thanx right back at you, Professor! We're flattered and pleased to have been part of your classes.

I read John Brunas and Richard Valley's fond look at THE RETURN OF DRACULA (\$S\$ #35) with relish. I remember the week, many years ago, that NYC's MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE showed the film every night, to my preteen delight. It's one of those low-budget gems that shouldn't work, and yet manage to leave us with images we'll dream about forever, such as the staking of the female vampire, and "Bellac's" horrific death in the pit. I also wanted to add that Francis Lederer's portrayal of the old-world, nattily dressed, almost fey vampire visitor has always seemed to me to have greatly informed Stephen King's depiction of Barlow in the novel Salem's Lot.

Inspired by the article, I watched THE RETURN OF DRACULA yet again. I actually don't think that is Hope Summers, with whose work I'm very familiar, as Cornelia, the parish hall busybody. I believe it is the last listed actress in the credits, Enid Yousen. The body, the nose, the face, and the voice are just . . . wrong. I checked a bunch of reference books, which were unhelpful (Don Glut's otherwise neat book had the boy next door played by Gage Clark, the reverend!), though one did list Miss Summers as a member of the cast. As I've said, though, I don't think that's her. If you get a chance, could you tell me what source you used (as there is, of course, no detailed cast list in the film itself)?

Bob Gutowski

Jackson Heights, NY
According to John Brunas, Hope Summers
is billed in the RETURN OF DRACULA
pressbook as playing the part of Cornelia.
Enid Yousen isn't listed in the pressbook cast
listing, but it's very likely that she is the European actress who played the true Cousin
Bellac's sister in the opening scenes at the
Transylvania train station. Both actresses are
listed in the film's main title, so that disposes of the possibility that Summers started

Continued on page 8

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Forrest J Ackerman

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SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 4

the film as Yousen and underwent a name change during production.

Ken Hanke's commentary, DANCIN' WITH THE MUMMY (SS #35), was a really perceptive comparison of Karl Freund's classic film, THE MUMMY (1932), and Stephen Sommer's version of the same material for the nineties. Personally, after reading Stephen Holden's negative review of the film in The Times and then seeing, much to my surprise, a very different movie, I was truly delighted with Mr. Hanke's largely positive review. But I can't agree with him about the placement of the love story of Imhotep, the High Priest of Osiris, and Anck-su-namon, the Pharaoh's mistress-in the original film, the "explanatory flashback" arrives much too late. In Hammer's version of 1959, it is placed much earlier, but still seems a bit disruptive. Now, in 1999, it is placed where it belongs, at the very beginning. Also, I agree with Mr. Hanke that, when Imhotep is turned into a special effect, he is not a very frightening creature, but I don't understand why he didn't take the time to speak about Arnold Vosloo's performance. Mr. Vosloo's take on Imhotep is truly extraordinary—a clearly sexual being whose carnal desire for Anck-sunamon can never be quenched. And, in his magnificent high-priest regalia, Mr. Vosloo can certainly turn heads.

Raymond Banacki Brooklyn, NY

Scarlet Street has the distinct advantage over every other genre magazine in that it has an extraordinarily gifted writer for its publisher/editor, as is evidenced by Richard Valley's fascinating examination (with John Brunas) of THE RETURN OF DRACULA in Scarlet Street #35. I'm sure Mr. Valley's own work must inspire his

writers to greater and greater heights. I hope to see much more from him in the near future.

Patricia Kelso New Brighton, MN

Scarlet Street #34 was another fab issue! You certainly know how to hit on the nostalgia nerve. I was taken back to those early days when the horror cons of today were little more than small dealers rooms for comic collectors, with a few bins of posters where you could pick up an 11x14 lobby card set on DRACULA'S DAUGHTER for seven bucks—all originals, too!

It was nice to see Jane Adams say nice things about John Carradine's Dracula. I've often thought his portrayal overlooked—not as legendary as Bela Lugosi or as compelling as Christopher Lee, but a fine creation all the same. I met Mr. Carradine around 1970, I believe. I interviewed him for our local newspaper (Temperance, Michigan) in connection with a tour he was doing of readings from Shakespeare and Edgar Allan Poe. It was an interesting encounter. He was obviously already afflicted with arthritis: his hand had taken on the appearance of a claw, but his voice was rich in timbre and he performed with enthusiasm. It was somewhat poignant to see this great character actor appearing in the cafeteria/ auditorium of a small community college with bad lighting and no set. But could he cast a spell! His readings were well chosen and his "Tell-Tale Heart" particularly chilling. When we sat down to talk, he set guide rules. "We will not discuss the horrors," he said, rolling his R's and giving me a great, wide-eyed Dracula stare. This crushed me, as I particularly wanted his views on Dracula. His other stipulation was a generous one: he wanted to be sure that any press release focus on his next generation. One son

was just opening on Broadway in ROYAL HUNT OF THE SUN (David) and another was working in films (Keith). As we discussed his many movies, I tried to steer him to HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN and HOUSE OF DRACULA by mentioning that I liked his getting closer to Stoker's description of Dracula by featuring the mustache. He said he fought for it, but that "they" (Jack Pierce? Universal?) wouldn't let him use a droopy one but one that made him "look like Adolphe Menjou." He caught my ruse and then called a halt to the "horrors." I couldn't help but feel that this great actor deserved better than to be touring the hinterlands at his advanced age, in an old tuxedo with fraying buttons and tattered silk. Yet he gave a performance I vividly recall to this day. His Lear, his Hamlettruly inspired and truly inspiring.

I also have to mention with what fondness I've been following Ross Care's terrific articles on all manner of movie music. So informed, so illuminating! Another great issue, guys! Give us more Loban, more Hanke, and more Drew Sullivan—can he write!

Farnham Scott Sunnyside, NY

Thank you so much for the very interesting and detailed review and analysis of truly "the best werewolf film ever made," WEREWOLF OF LONDON, in *Scarlet Street* #33. For the past 40 years I have felt somewhat alone and "out of it" due to my belief in this masterpiece.

I first saw WEREWOLF when I was about nine years old on SHOCK THE-ATER, hosted by the legendary Roland (Zacherley). It was love at first bite. Television showings were rare in the sixties and seventies; however, I watched it every chance I got. It was one of the very

Continued on page 9

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Frankly Scarlet

Oh, to be a fly on the wall! To have been there when Vincent Price made his Broadway debut opposite Helen Hayes in VICTORIA REGINA, when he chilled theatergoers as the sadistic fortune hunting hubby in ANGEL STREET, when he was dumped bottomside up in a vat of "wine" by Basil Rathbone and Boris Karloff on the set of the 1939 TOWER OF LONDON, when he couldn't stop laughing as he and costar Herbert Marshall found it impossible to keep a straight face filming the finale of THE FLY...

Lost opportunities, but then there's Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography (St. Martins, 1999), by Victoria Price, to make up for it. It's the next best thing for any fright fan who wants to know

everything—well, practically everything-about the busy life of one of our greatest horror stars, and a refreshing antidote to those who don't want to know anything. In the course of this issue's exclusive interview with Victoria, she frets that she's "not entirely sure that children make the best biographers She needn't have worried. Would that other stars of Hollywood's Golden Era had received so sympathetic a handling at the hands of their kids. Not that this "Daughter of Horror" hides any untidy facts about her celebrated if sometimes troubled father, but simply that she is understanding and forgiving of the faults and flaws that afflict even the best

Scarlet Street recommends Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography as the class act among books about the man who ran the HOUSE OF WAX. Don't miss it!

Speaking of HOUSE OF WAX (see how deviously clever Ye Reditor is?), that 1953 film and its 1933 predecessor, MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM, are the main features this issue. Accompanying them are interviews with HOUSE stars Paul Picerni and Phyllis Kirk, the latter marking the return to these pages of one of our fave contributors: Michael Mallory. Mike's also back to investigate TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM, in keeping with our ceriferous theme.



Oh, and by the way, managing editor Tom Amorosi and I popped up on the nationally broadcast JOEY REY-NOLDS SHOW on radio (originating from WOR 710AM in New York) this past December, and we'll be making more appearances over the air in future months. Watch for us. Of course, you won't see us; it's radio

Richard Valley

SCARLET LETTERS Continued from page 8

first films I taped in 1980 when I got my first VCR.

Unfortunately, articles on this film were harder to find than TV showings. My hat is off to Ken Hanke for his highly detailed and well researched article. The photos were a treat, with many I had not seen before. Also of great interest were the articles by Richard H. Bush and Richard Valley. Is there really a possibility of the soundtrack being available on CD?

Of course you know I just had to view it again last night and, thanks to *Scarlet Street*, I now see one of my all time favorite horror classics "under a new light." Thanks so much and keep up the excellent work!

Bill Battaglia Moorestown, NJ

I'm glad there is someone out there who finally agrees with me. I've always felt HOUSE OF DRACULA was better than HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN, if mainly because it's darker. Not thematically: after all, there are virtually no survivors in HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN, and it has a really dark, downbeat ending. HOUSE OF DRACULA ends more positively, for sure, with the hero and his girl exiting fully alive. But much of the film takes place after dark. There's more of an emphasis on evil. Dr. Edelmann has no redeeming qualities once he becomes infused with Dracula's blood. In both films, Dracula doesn't really warrant fear. Perhaps it's his intonations of misery that fall squarely in the vein of Larry Talbot.

Edelmann is the common thread which ties all the stories together in HOUSE OF D, and he just keeps regressing as the film goes on, growing more evil as the infection in his blood more strongly exerts itself. Daniel in HOUSE OF F, I believe, is there to get our sympathy. It seems everyone involved in the production thought we'd feel sorry for him and hope he'd get the gypsy girl. (After all, we're made to identify with Daniel throughout the picture, thus feeling betrayed ourselves when she falls for Talbot.) Yet, I never feel sorry for him. I simply feel that he's annoying. And when he finally starts whipping the Monster, I want to see Daniel tossed out the window.

All in all, HOUSE OF DRACULA is an entertaining picture despite its budget and the familiarity of its script. A shining spot among Universal's formula films.

Chris Workman Trotwood, OH

 $\overline{\mathbf{x}}$

As one of the older generation of fantasy film lovers, a Baby Boomer who was fortunate enough to buy the first issue of Famous Monsters, to see the first televised airing of Universal's SHOCK THEATER, to actually be alive at the same time as Lugosi and Karloff and Chaney Jr., who was privileged to once meet Vincent Price, who devoured the first full-length books on horror films (Clarens, Butler, Gifford) and who spent a decade of Saturdays watching first-run double features the likes of REVENGE OF FRANKEN-STEIN and CURSE OF THE DEMON, THE FLY and SPACE MASTER X7, and THE HIDEOUS SUN DEMON and TEENAG-

ERS FROM OUTER SPACE, who very much appreciates the scholarship and research of magazines such as *Scarlet Street*, and whose love of this once heavily maligned genre has never faltered, I must say to all of you who wish to introduce politics, sexual agendas, and political correctness into the proceedings—please just cool it!

You are threatening to take the fun out of a very unique realm, contaminating the pristine otherworldliness of a very special place I have hidden out in and escaped to, when the need was upon me, my whole life. There are other magazines, other venues for this sort of thing. Give us a break from the real world.

Bruce Dettman San Francisco, CA

Relax and enjoy your Scarlet Street, Bruce. Alarmed by your charges, we immediately checked with the highest authorities in fundamentalist religion and ultraconservative politics and have been assured that, in their view, we are in no way politically correct. As for our "sexual agenda," the phrase, of course, means that we run articles acknowledging the existence of homosexuality, both in this world and the pristine otherworldliness of anywhere else. Difficult not to when we're interviewing Clive Barker or writing about James Whale. No reason it should worry you. That about covers your concerns, I think, except to say that the man who produced that first issue of Famous Monsters thinks we're the cat's pajamas....

I prefer to buy my back and current Scarlet Streets at the Chiller Con and catch

Continued on page 11



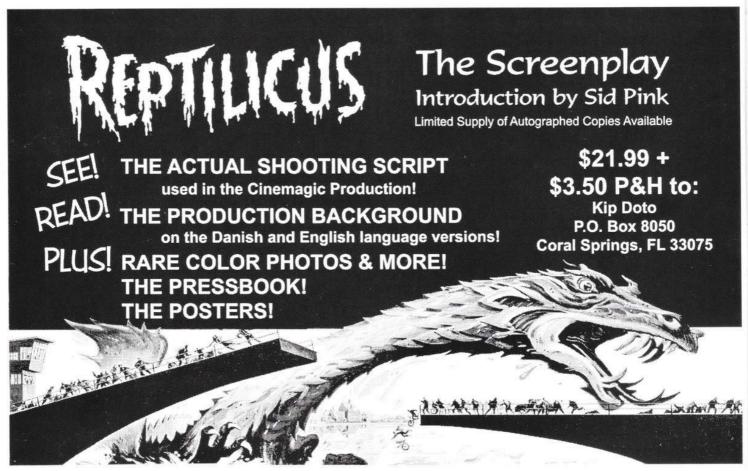
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SCARLET LETTERS Continued from page 9

up on my reading over the weekends. I came back from Chiller with six copies of *SS*, and two more of #30 (one of which I've already sent to a good friend in Colorado). I'm reading them at random—as they went into the bag is the way they're coming out. My first was ish #32.

coming out. My first was ish #32. Was this the "Forry Takes a Holiday" ish? I wasn't able to find any mention of his absence anywhere in da mag. Elsewhere, kudos to Ross Care for "scooping the mainstream press on the subject of Lewis Carroll's photography "hobby." I read in today's Star-Ledger that a respected author of children's books has been unable to get her Lewis Carroll biography published because she dared to broach the subject of Carroll's photography in a book aimed at 9- to 14-year-olds. Ken Hanke was enlightening (as always) in his in-depth article on Paramount Horrors, a rarely-covered subject. Where was he when we were writing the questions for The Amazing Science Fiction & Horror Trivia Game? But, as you could probably guess, my favorite piece was the Ian Mc-Kellen interview. I only wish it was longer. The APT PUPIL support piece was very interesting, also.

I'm sorry, but I sped through ish #31 (the "Marilyn" issue). Not much there to interest me, although I will go back and read Rick McKay's interview with David Manners; but only because I've thoroughly enjoyed every other interview I've read of Rick's. Yes, I guess I'm a fan.

I'm waste-deep into ish #33, and Ken Hanke's piece on WEREWOLF OF LON-DON (UNDER A NEW LIGHT) has my Irish up. (Wait a minute-I'm Swedish!) The article has a defensive tone to it. It's almost as if he'd got into a barroom argument with someone who ran WEREWOLF into the ground, and this is his uninterrupted defense. I've never been a big fan of WEREWOLF, a lesser light in Universal's first horror cycle, but it certainly ranks well above most of the films in Universal's second horror cycle (the one which begins with SON OF FRANKENSTEIN). I think it was the annoying central characters. Dr. Wilfred Glendon certainly was a cold fish. Did he truly care for his wife, or did he develop the passion for his missus from guilt? Lisa could've used a lesson or two in loyalty, and possibly, fidelity. Paul Ames was a cad, and Miss Ettie was downright irritating. And Ken, there's no need to praise WEREWOLF with faint damnation of two other classic films, THE WOLF MAN and AN AMERICAN WERE-WOLF IN LONDON. (Okay, AMERI-CAN WEREWOLF may not be a classic, but it's certainly one of my favorites.) Defend WEREWOLF by letting it stand solely on its own merits, which you did as the piece progressed. Ken <u>did</u> accomplish a good thing with his article-he made me rack up WEREWOLF again. First time in, oh, four or five years. Still a good movie. Not great, though.

Randy Dannenfelser drtrivia@interactive.net As a fan of Universal's HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN and HOUSE OF DRAC-ULA, I really enjoyed the HOUSE PARTY on Scarlet Street in Issue #34. While not as "serious" as some horror films, Erle Kenton's pair of monster-infested epics are highly entertaining, thanks largely to an incredible cast of performers. I loved the interviews with House femmes Elena Verdugo and Jane Adams is related to the enigmatic Ambrose Bierce, author of such memorable tales as "An Occurance at Owl Creek Bridge."

One minor note of correction regarding Michael Draine's otherwise excellent TWILIGHT ZONE piece: Rod Serling was 50 when he died, not 51.

Timothy Walters Muskogee, OK

Write today to Scarlet Letters

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Yes, kids, it's the *Scarlet Street* Slightly Mangled Special. We have in our vaults some issues with minor defects: price tags glued on the covers, a folded page, a gypsy curse scrawled on the classifieds . . . nothing too grim, but enough to render them unsuitable for sale at the usual rate.

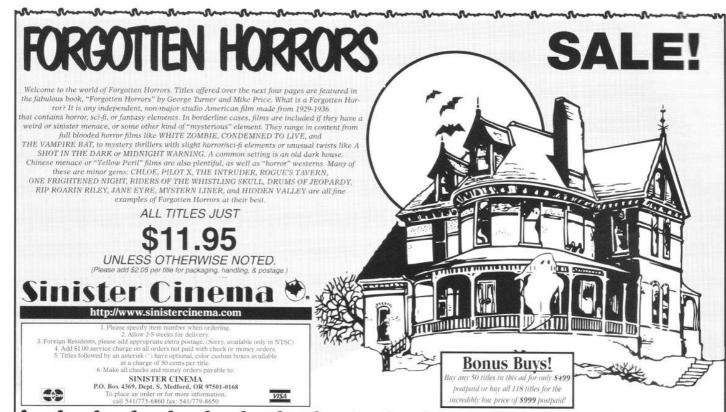
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LOST ZEPPELIN* (1929, Tiffany) Ricardo Cortez, Conway Tearle, Virginia Valli. A little dated, but this early sci-fi talkie has some brilliant visual shots in this tale about an ill-fated expedition to the South Pole aboard a gigantic zeppelin. Valli gives one of the most vomit-inducing examples of over-acting ever seen From 16mm. S089 TERROR BY NIGHT (1931, Famous Attractions) Una Merkel, William Collier, Jr., Zasu Pitts, Nat Pendieton. A rich, philandering nusband is found horribly murdered in his posh penthouse apartment. At one point, all the lights go out and a suspect is found shot. The police arrest the wrong man. The neighbor below figures out who did it and the trick murder weapon used for the crime. 16mm. FH48 DRUMS OF JEOPARDY* (1931, Tiffany, aka MARK OF TERROR) Warner Oland, Lloyd Hughes, June Collyer, Mischa Auer. A forgotten minor classici. Oland gives it his all as a mad doctor helibent on revenge against the family that caused his daughter's death, Lab scenes, spooky houses, poison gas. this is a full-blooded horror gem that you don't want to miss. Outstanding, From 16mm. H001

THE PHANTOM (1931, Artclass) Guinn Williams, Wilfred Lucas A very rare cheaple. A group of people is menaced by a hooded killer in a spooky house. This has all the cliches that made "old dark house" movies so popular. Not bad. From 16mm, FH01

A very rare cheapie. A group of people is riteriacus of a spooky house. This has all the cliches that made "old dark house movies so popular. Not bad. From 16mm. FH01.

CHINATOWN AFTER DARK (1931) Rex Lease, Barbara Kent, Carmel Myers. The mysterious tale of a Chinese dragon lady who stops at nothing to obtain a rare dagger encrusted with a valuable gem. Creepy Chinatown settings in this obscure thriller. 16mm. FH02.

MURDER AT MIDNIGHT (1931, Tilfany) Hale Hamilton, Alice White, Alleen Pringle. A group of people is in an old house watching a play. Their applause turns into gapss of horror as a death scene turns out to be real. Who is the killer? From 16mm. FH03.

STRANGE ADVENTURE (1932, Monogram, aka THE WAYNE MURDER CASE) Regis Toomey, June Clyde, Dwight Frye. At an old dark house, an elderly man reads an inheritance to his not-so-devoted relatives. However, a hooded killer is on the premises and kills the old man. Other victims follow. The usual old dark house trappings are in abundance. A good early Monogram. 16mm. FH04.

PHANTOM EXPRESS (1932, Majestic) J. Farrell McDonald, Sally Blane. A train wrecks while trying to avoid a head-on collision with an approaching train. Suddenly, the other train disappears into thin airl. This is a well-done little thriller with a weird twist to it. The climancte train chase is outstanding. From 16mm. FH05.

WHITE ZOMBIE/LOST LUGOSI INTERVIEW* (1932) Bela

mactic train chase is outstanding. From 16mm, FH05 WHITE ZOMBIE/LOST LUGOSI INTERVIEW* (1932) Bela

WHITE ZOMBIE/LOST LUGOSI INTERVIEW* (1932) Bela Lugosi, Robert Frazer, Madge Bellamy, John Harron. In 1994 our 35mm material on White Zombie was transferred to video at a top lab in Pittsburgh. The resulting video restoration was like nothing you've ever seen-beyond spectacular! Our video master offers this classic in the most optimum video & audio quality possible. Stunning, L001 THE THIRTEENTH GUEST (1932, Monogram) Ginger Rogers, Lyle Talbot, J. Farrell MacDonald. One of the best indie old dark house chillers to come out of the 1930s. A hooded killer in a spooky house slays his victims by electrocution as they're talking on the phone! Recently upgraded from a nice original 18mm print. FH06





A SHRIEK IN THE NIGHT (1933, Allied) Ginger Rogers, Lyle Talbot, Arthur Hoyt, Harvey Clark. Watch out! There's a mad killer on the loose in a skyline penthouse. He uses poison gas on his victims in a very lethal manner. An exciting, horrific climax. 16mm. FH14

in a very lethal manner. An excluing, horrific climax. 16mm. FH14

TANGLED DESTINIES (1932 Mayfair) Vera Reynolds, Glenn
Tryon, Lloyd Whitlock, Dons Hill. An old dark house thriller. An
airplane makes a forced landing in the desert. After traveling through
a dense fog, the passengers come to a deserted house. Shortly after
they enter, the lights go dut and a shot rings out! From 16mm. FH44

THE MIDNIGHT WAS NINGS.

a dense fog, the passengers come to a deserted house. Shortly after they enter, the lights go out and a short hings out. From 16mm. FH44. THE MIDNIGHT WARNING (1932, Mayfair) William "Stage" Boyd, John Harron. The strange tale of a man who literally disappears" into thin air 'i at a luxury hotel. A detective investigates the mystery for his relatives. Why the odd cover-up? 16mm. FH07. SECRETS OF WU SIN (1932, Invincible) Grant Withers, Lois Wilson, Robert Warwick. A "yellow periff" film. Murder, mystery and coolie smuggling in Chinatown. A newspaper editor and his female reporter face danger as they crack the case. From 16mm. FH08



MURDER AT DAWN (1932, Big Four) Jack Mulhall, Josephin DUnn, Mischa Auer Two young lovers head for the mysterious mountain hideaway of the girl's father--an eccentric professor--to obtain his consent for their marriage. The professor has developed a working solar death ray! Lots of murders and mysterious goings-on ensue, complete with trap doors, faces at windows, falling bodies, and nappenings. Electrical special effects wizard created the climatic death ray seeother weird happenings. imatic death ray scene. 16mm. FH51

THE CROOKED CIRCLE (1932, World Wide) Ben Lyon, Zasu Pitts The hooded members of the evil "Crooked Circle" gang vow revenge against members of the anti-crime group, "The Sphinx Club." Lots of creepy thrills as the two groups clash. From 16mm. FH10

ots of creepy thrills as the two groups clash. From 16mm. FH10
GANGSTERS OF THE SEA (1932, Goldsmith, aka OUT OF GANGSTERS OF THE SEA (1932. Goldsmith, aka OUT OF SINGAPORE) Noah Beery, Dorothy Burgess, Montagu Love Weird happenings as the captain of a ship falls ill with a strange disease (he's actually been poisoned). A gang of thugs then tries to take over the ship. A very, very explosive climax. From 16mm, FH52 STRANGERS OF THE EVENING (1932. Tiffany, aka THE HIDDEN CORPSE) Eugene Pallette, Zasu Pitts, Lucien Littlefield Some mysterious happenings are going on at the city morgue after a man's body disappears. Soon bodies are everywhere! 16mm FH11 THE MONSTER WALKS (1932, Action) Rex Lease, Mischa Auer, Sheldon Lewis. Storms rage around the mysterious old house where a killer ape is on the loose. One of the cheapest of all the poverty row horror flicks, but still kind of fun. From 16mm. FH12. SINISTER HANDS (1932, Kent) Jack Mulhall, Phyllis Barrington.

SINISTER HANDS (1932, Kent) Jack Mulhall, Phyllis Barrington

SINISTER HANDS (1932, Kent) Jack Mulhall, Phyllis Barrington, Mischa Auer. Auer is a strange onential mystic who comes to a creepy manison to read his crystal ball to a small gathering. During the reading, the lights go out! Suddenly there's a groan and a body falls to the floor. Mulhall is called in to find out exactly who done it. It seems all the guests have a motive. Gee, how unusual. 16mm. FH54. GET THAT GIRL (1932, aka FEAR MANSION) Dick Talmadge. Shirley Grey, Fred Malatesta. A really weird little film. A young girl, who is about to receive a large inheritance, is abducted to an isolated sanitarium. Behind its mysterious walls is a crazed doctor performing strange experiments. He's a developed a process for changing people into mannequins! Can Dick rescue her in time? 16mm. FH55. THE WHISPERING SHADOW (1933, Mascot). Beia Lugosi. Malcom McGregor, Viva Tattersall, H.B. Walthall. There's weird goings-

Malcom McGregor, Viva Tattersall, H.B. Walthall. There's weird goings on in the eerie wax museum of the mysterious Professor Strang. A fearsome killer is on the loose! This is the well-edited feature version of the

fearsome killer is on the loose! This is the well-edited feature version of the Mascot serial of the same name. From a nice old 16mm print FH56.

PICTURE BRIDES (1933, Allied) Regis Toomey, Alan Hale, Dorothy Mackaili, Dorothy Libaire. Four picture brides arrive in the deepest part of the wild Brazilian jungle to meet their husbands-to-be at a remote diamond mine. They find their lives in danger by the murderous sex fiend owner of the mine, played to the hilt by Halo Great performances by all. A steamy jungle setting 35mm FH57.

THE INTRUDER (1933, Allied) Monte Blue. Lia Lee, Mischa Aluer, A. Grüss hip, sinks, in a visiget storm shorth after a possible.

THE INTRUDER (1933, Allied) Monte Blue, Lila Lee, Mischa Auer. A cruise ship sinks in a violent storm shortly after a grisly murder is committed on board! The survivors make it to a mysterious island where weird jungle noises put them ill at ease. They re soon horrified upon discovering a cave full of skeletons! After another murder occurs, several of the survivors flee blindly into the jungle only to encounter a wild man and a killer ape! This is one of the most fantastic and intriguing of all Forgotten Horrors thrillers. 16mm. FH53. SUCKER MONEY (1933, Kent) Mischa Auer. Mae Busch. A bother solid intuities the disciplination of a weight harder in a

SUCKER MONEY (1933, Kent) Mischa Auer, Mae Busch A phony spiritualist hypnotizes the daughter of a wealthy banker in a plot to bilk the man out of his fortune. A crack reporter comes in to crack the case. Auer's good as the phony mystic. Ho hum: FH13
THE SPHINX* (1933) Monogram, Lionel Atwill, Sheila Terry, Theodore Newton. Here's a nicely done mystery chiller from Monogram, featuring Atwill in a dual role. A man seen at the scene of a murder is known to be mute. Yet he is seen and heard talking while leaving the scene. 72? Who's the real killer? From 16mm, A001

THE DEATH KISS* (1932, KBS) David Manners, Bela Lugosi Edward Van Sloan. A movie star is killed right in front of the cameras after receiving an on screen kiss. Bela is one of the prime suspects in this extremely well made Hollywood mystery chiller. 16mm. LOQ2



THE VAMPIRE BAT* (1933, Majestic) Lionel Atwill, Fay Wray. Melvyn Douglas, Dwight Frye Looks and feels like an early Universal horror film (shot on Universal's back lot). Vampires are blamed for the deaths of the victims of a mad doctor's blood experiments. Frye is terrific as the local idiot who is blamed for the killings. Awill, one of filmdom's best mad doctor, is superb. Recommended 16mm A002 THE PHANTOM BROADCAST (1933, Monogram) Raiph

Forbes, Vivienne Osborne, Gail Patrick, Guinn Williams. A famous radio singer is found horribly murdered. It's learned his singing voice



Lionel WRAY in WE VAMPIRE BAT

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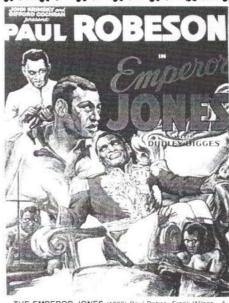
A STUDY IN SCARLET (1933, World Wide) Reginald Owen

ain. Sherlock Holmes is called in to investigate. 18mm. SH02
TARZAN THE FEARLESS* (1933, Principal) Buster Crabbe, acqueline Wells. Tarzan is pitted against a tribe that worships a range, ancient god. Feature version of a lost serial. 18mm. Jnn7
THE FLAMING. (1944).

THE FLAMING SIGNAL (1933, Imperial) Mischa Auer, Noah

THE FLAMING SIGNAL (1933, Imperal) Mischa Auer, Noah Beery, Sr., H.B. Walthal, John Horsley. A flyer is stranded on a jungle island where strange, "life returning" rites take place after a witch doctor has been killed. A little creaky, but not too bad. 16mm. FH15.

TOMORROW AT SEVEN* (1933, Jefferson) Chester Morris, Vivienne Osborne, Frank McHugh. Good chiller! A small plane creashes! A group of the frightened survivors face perils in a creepy old mansion as a maniac known as "the Black Ace" runs amok. FH16



THE EMPEROR JONES (1933) Paul Robes, Frank Wilson I'me EMPEKUK JUNES (1933) Paul Robes, Frank Wilson. A killer escapes from a chain gang and sets up his own brutal empire in the wilds of Haitl. However, after a revolt his subjects drive him into the jungle where his victim's ghosts haunt him. 16mm. FH17.

HOUSE OF MYSTERY* (1934, Monogram) Verna Hillie, Ed Lowry, Brandon Hurst. An ancient curse and a killer ape are threatening a group of frightened people confined within the walls of a hausted massion. A restly good Monogram chiller. 15mm. FH39.

threatening a group of frightened people confined within the walls of a haunted mansion. A pretty good Monogram chiller. 16mm. FH18

THE LOST JUNGLE (1934, Mascot). Clyde Beatty, Ceclia Parker. It's Clyde facing jungle perils again, this time stumbling upon an iron door leading to a lost city-whose sole inhabitant is a monster gorilla. Feature version of the serial of the same name. 16mm. J010.

THE GHOST WALKS (1934) John Miljan, June Collyer, Spencer.

Charters. A group of actors find peril on a stormy night in an old dark house. During the evening, a ghostly specter is seen! Is it a real ghost? Murder soon follows! Plenty of shudders. 16mm. FIZO JANE EYRE* (1934, Monogram) Colin Clive, Virginia Bruce, Beryl

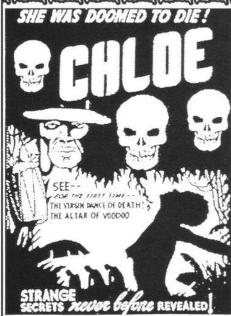
Mercer The classic tale of a governess surrounded by mystery in an eerie mansion lorded over by the mysterious Edward Rochester She's barred from a wing of the mansion where maniacal screams are heard nightly. Top acting in this Gothic blend of mystery and romance Considered by some to be the best Monogram film 16mm. FH34 MANIAC* (1934) Horace Carpenter. Bill Woods A true anti-

masterpiece. A mad scientist and his even madder assistant conduct experiments to resurrect the dead. The assistant injects a man with experiments to resurrect the dead. The dashistant mysics of his manning fluid, locks cat-fighting women in a room together, and eats a cat's eyeball. Totally engrossing for its sheer lunacy, and we give it our highest "bad movie" recommendation. Wowl 16mm. FH19

give it our highest 'bad movie' recommendation. Wow! 16mm. FH19 MURDER ON THE CAMPUS (1934) Charles Starrett, Edward Van Sloan, Shirley Grey. Poison gas is the murder weapon of a mad killer at large and seeking victims on a college campus. Starrett sgood is this OK campus-side murder mystery. From 16mm. FH21 MYSTERY LINER* (1934, Monogram) Noah Beery, Astrid Allyn, Rajph Lewis. Murder, mystery and weird experiments aboard an ocean liner. The 'ghost' of a former captain is seen. There are also some interesting Strickfadden style lab scenes, as well. 16mm. FH23.



For more great Forgotten Horror titles, go on to the next page!



CHLOE* (1934) Olive Borden, Reed Howes, Molly O'Day, A injaried, old black voodoo mistress comes out of the swamp to seek evenge on the plantation lord blamed for her husband's death. Her laughter, Chioe (who looks white) finds herself form between the love of a black man and a white foreman. Suddenly it's discovered she nay actually be the plantation lord's long lost child! A frenzied ealistic sacrificial voodoo ceremony highlights the climax of this wonderful film that weaves its way through swamp shacks, alligators, loodoo dolls, shakes, bats, and cypress trees. A lyrical orchestral core underlies the film and adds a flavor that's similar to White Combine Chibe is a fascinating piece of rare cinema. 16mm. H245.

Score underlies the first ascinating piece of rare cinema. 16mm. H245
RETURN OF CHANDU* (1934) Bela Lugosi, Maria Alba, Luc
Prival. Feature version of the Return of Chandu serial, taken fir
chapters 1-4. Chandu fights to save the Princess Nadji from

strange religious cult. From a beautiful 16mm original print. L005. CHANDU ON THE MAGIC ISLAND* (1934) Bela Lugosi, Maria Alba, Lucien Prival. Feature version of the *Return of Chandu* serial, from chapters 5-12. Chandu and Princess Nadjii are captives.

DRUMS O'VOODOO (1934 aka LOUISIANA) Laura Bowman

DRUMS O'VOODOO (1934, aka LOUISIANA) Laura Bowman, Lonel Monages Our video quality is nice, but our 16mm source print was edited, splicely and ends abruptly. Basic story is complete: A voodoo woman puts a spell on a pimp! From 16mm. FH22
THE MOONSTONE* (1934, Monogram) David Manners. Phyllis Barry, Jameson Thomas. An adventurer and his Hindu servant bring the "Moonstone" (a fame gem from a lost Indian temple) to a gloomy mansion during a terrific storm. The creepy estate is filled with opears! 16mm FH49

the "Moonstone" (a famed gem from a lost Indian temple) to a gioc mansion during a terrific storm. The creepy estate is filled visinister guests. During the night, the gem disappears! 16mm. FH. GREEN EYES" (1934, Chesterfield) Shirley Grey, Cha Starrett, Dorothy Revier. A costume party at a large country mans turns to norror when the guests find their nost stabbed to death.

MURDER IN THE MUSEUM* (1934, Kent) H.B. Walthall, John arron, Phyllis Barrington. A creepy chiller centered in a weird side-low museum filled with freaks and misfits. When a shot rings out, a ominent local politician falls to the floor, dead! A sharp reporter the figure out who the mysterious killer is. One frightening moment

BEAST OF BORNEO* (1934 (1934) John Preston, Mae Stuart gene Sigaloff. A mad scientist named "Boris Borodoff" conductsinge experiments involving men and abes. He and his beautiful istant go deep into the jungle to secure a live ape so he can pilete his experiments. This film contains the most laughable aper



A SCREAM IN THE NIGHT* (1935, Commodore) Lon Chanes

A SCREAM IN THE NIGHT (1935, Commodore) Lon Chaney, Zara Tazil, Sheila Terry, Manuel Lopez Lon has two roles: a scar-eyed killer and a handsome detective. Agent Lon is stationed in the orient, seeking the notorious thief, Johnny Fly. Evil Lon is Johnny's murderous henchman. A simister, exobic flavor. From 35mm. FH80 CITY OF LOST MEN" (1935) Kane Richmond, Bill "Stage" Boyd, Claudia Dell. A well-edded condensation of the serial. THE LOST CITY. It's a wide combination of quality and drek. Judicrous acting, fantastic las cenes. (by Kenneth Strickfadden), lane dialogue, all woven together in the purest camp style possible. 16mm. S201

woven together in the purest camp style possible. Intern. 3201

THE LOST CITY (1935) Kane Richmond, Claudia Deli. A mad tyrant attempts to conquer the world from his fantastic electrical city hidden deep within the jungle. This film contains what may be the best lab scenes ever filmed for a poverty row chiller. Yet another featurized version of the serial of the same name. From 16mm. \$002

CAPTURED IN CHINATOWN (1935) Charles Delaney, Mario Shilling A 'yellow peril' thriller A bloody feud between two Chinesi families leads to mystery and murder. Somewhat primitive film making, but still fairly interesting. From a beautiful 16mm print FH27 imilies leads to mystery and number of the property of the pro

Custom agents track gonrunners into Hong Kong and criminal intested Macao. A spectacular village burning sequence and suspenseful climax. This is an exciting little thriller, much better than the typical face of this type. From 16mm. FH35.

MYSTERIOUS MR. WONG* (1935) Bela Lugosi, Wallace Ford.

Arline Judge No classic, but critics have been unkind to this film that contains one of Bela's meatier villain roles. He has some priceless loque as he plays a madman seekir adman seeking the legendary coins of 16mm print L008

ONE FRIGHTENED NIGHT (1935, Mascot) Charley Grapewin ONE FRIGHTENED NIGHT (1935, Mascot) Charley Grapewin, valiace Forc, Mary Carlisle, Regis Toomey. One of the best Mascot novies ever made! It certainly has the best opening titles of any '30s overty row horror film. Your basic old dark house horror story, but lone with a kind of tongue in cheek approach. From 16mm. FH24 MURDER BY TELEVISION* (1935) Bela Lugosi, June Collyer,

Huntley Gordon, Hattie McDaniel Industrial spies are hired to steal a new revolutionary television device. During a broadcast, its inventor is killed on the air. Bela has a dual role. L007



THE MIDNIGHT PHANTOM (1935, Reliable) Reginald De l'audia Dell, Lloyd Hughes. A police chief is murdered with a strange outh American poison at a midnight lecture. When the autopsy octor is about to announce his findings, he too is killed 1 fibrm. FHZS OUANGA (1935 aka CRIME OF VOODOO) Fredi Washington

Philip Brandon, Mane Paston. A forgotten, all-black horror film about a voodoo priestess who sends out a "death ouanga" to the fiancee of the man she lusts for. When that fails, she sends two zombies from their graves to shatch the girl away and bring her to a violent death. A

mustisee curiosity, much in the same vein as WHITE ZOMBIE FH50 DEVIL MONSTER (1935/46) Barry Norton Blanche Mahaffey This could be the single worst, stupidest film in our entire catalog. If socoo bad. Sallors battle a superimposed monster from the deep

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE (1935) Chick Chandler Shirley Grey, Dorothy Revier, Claude King: A reporter sets prove the invalidity of circumstantial evidence by staging a murder and taking the rap for it. Unfortunately, the 'fake' n From 16mm FH46

victim proves to be really dead! From 16mm, FH46
CRIME OF DR. CRESPI* (1935, Liberty) Eric Von Stroheim,
Dwight Frye Hospital horror! A mad doctor pilots to get nd of his foe
by buying him alive. Von Stroheim plays his usual egotistical selfvery effectively. Probably Dwight Frye's biggest role 16mm, FH28
A SHOT IN THE DARK (1935, Chesterfield) Charles Starrett.

Edward Van Sloan, Robert Warwick. A terrific povert mystery with a mysterious murder weapon. Well-done A terrific poverty row murde





CONDEMNED TO LIVE* (1935, Invincible) Ralph Morgan, Mischa Auer, Maxine Doyle. This well-done poverty row production has a vampire terrorizing a small European village. This is one of those rare films that rises far above its low budget roots. Creepy and in fine form as the vampire 16mm H009

Mospheric with Morgan in hise form as the vampire. I term H009
ROGUE'S TAVERN (1936 Mercury) Wallace Ford. Barbara
Pepper Clara Young. John Elliot. A great poverty row horror film
about a mad killer loose in an old hotel on a dark, gloomy night. A
errific climax features one of the most maniacal speeches you'll ever
hear. Wow. Should ve been titled HORROR HOTEL. 16mm. FH33
SHADOW OF CHINATOWN* (1936) Bela Lugosi, Herman Brix,

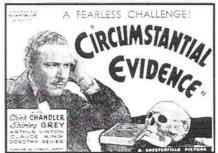
uanna Walters. Bela plays a madman out to destroy the merchants of Chinatown. Herman and Luanna try to stop his insane schemes.

Feature version of the serial of the same name. From 16mm. L011 REVOLT OF THE ZOMBIES* (1936, Academy) Dean Jagger, Dcrothy Stone. An evil genius uses mind control and poison gas to turn people into zomble slaves. Awful acting in spots, but there are some very atmospheric settings in the eerie wilds of the Cambodian jungles amidst ancient temples and monuments. 16mm. H011 A FACE IN THE FOG. (1936, Victory) June Collyer, Lloyd Hughes, Laurence Gray, Al St. John. Murder abounds in this back, stage chiller. Featured is a mad hunchback who's suspected of a number of noisy murders. Onean, but for From 16mm. F129.

stage chiller. Featured is a mad hunchback who's suspected of a number of gristy murders. Cheap, but fun From 16mm. FH29. THE CLUTCHING HAND (1936) Jack Mulhall. Robert Frazer. Mystery surrounds a scientist who has discovered a formula for synthetic gold. This is the feature version of the 15-chapter serial of the same name. Creepy, mysterious, and lots of fun. 16mm. FH31. NEW ADVENTIBES. OF TAPSAN (1938) Hergman Grist, Illia.

e same name Creepy, mysterious, and lots of fun. 16mm. FH31 NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN (1936) Herman Brix, Ula Holt E. R. Burroughs personally supervised this Tarzan epic with very good results. Tarzan is pitted against a tribe that worships a strange. 16mm

TARZAN AND THE GREEN GODDESS (1936) Herman Brix



yarn that finds its characters and house. From 16mm. FH30

uspects all gathered in an old dark house. From 16mm, FH30 HOUSE OF SECRETS (1936, Chesterfield) Leslie Fenton, furiel Evans. Noei Madison. A well made, poverty row, old dark ouse chiller with pienty of atmosphere. A young man inherits an einer mansion that's filled with mystery and terror. From 16mm, FH36 JAWS OF THE JUNGLE (1935) Teeto, Minta, Walla. Hordes if monstrous vamprire bats drive a native tribe from their village into he jungle, where they encounter every jungle beast imaginable. See hastly footage of a vamprie back killing a peacock! 35mm. FH61 KELLY OF THE SECRET SERVICE (1936, Victory) Lloyd vinnes. Sheigh Mannors, Screet Taylor, A tear gas grenade is

Hughes Sheila Mannors, Forrest Taylor. A tear gas grenade is hurled into a lab and a radio controlled bomb device is stolen. An agent comes in to solve the mysterious case. He ends up in a cre

agent comes in to solve the mysterious case. He ends up in a creepy mansion honeycombed with secret passageways. From 16mm, FH47 DEATH FROM A DISTANCE (1936, Invincible) Russell Hopton Lola Lane, George Marion. An astronomical observatory is the setting for a mysterious murder pilot. Who is the weird killer? Some sci-fi elements. Hopton is good. From 16mm. FH32

A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE TURNER

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, GEORGE TURNER AND like PRICE'S STELLAR FILM RESEARCH BOOK, FORGOTTEN HORRORS, WAS RECENTLY UPDATED. ND MADE AVAILABLE AGAIN THROUGH MIDNIGHT MARQUEE PRESS. SADLY, CO-AUTHOR GEORGE TURNER PASSED AWAY AROUND THE TIME OF ITS RELEASE. WHEN IT CAME TO POVERTY ROW CINEMA, GEORGE WAS ONE OF THE FOREMOST FILM HISTORIANS IN THE WORLD. HE HAD AN INCREDIBLE MEMORY AND WAS KNOWN TO GIVE ACCURATE, DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF FILMS HE HAD NOT SEEN IN DECADES. HE AND MIKE PRICE HAD A VISION MANY YEARS AGO OF PUBLISHING THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF '30S POVERTY HORROR FILMS. NOT ONLY DID GEORGE LIVE TO SEE THIS ACCOMPLISHED, BUT IN DOING SO, HE AND MIKE HELPED BRING TO THE SURFACE MANY OBSCURE IN SOME WAYS THEIR WORK HAS LITERALLY RE-DEFINED WHAT THE HORROR FILM IS.



RIP ROARING RILEY* Surns. Grant Withers. Riley heads for an island to investigate weirn appenings. On the island, thugs have forced a scientist to develop a source of the property of the standard property of the standard property of the standard form. FH62 LASH OF THE PENITENTES (1937) Josef Swickard. Based

Based rue story, a reporter stumbles onto a bizarre religious cult in the west that worships pain and torture. This shorter 35 minute in is the only known remaining footage on this film. 16mm. X031

PILOT X* (1937 aka DEATH IN THE AIR) John Carroll, Lona Andre. Leon Ames Several planes are shot down by a mystenous killer in a black plane with a large "X" on his wing. The suspects are W W1 aces who gather at a creepy mansion. Hidden rooms, secret doors lurking figures. lightning storms, etc. are all part of this great doars houser childer. Plus, you'll see sky thrilling slaore as the mada aerial killer shoots down his innocent victims. A must. 35mm, M256.

enal kiner shoots down his linkoeth washes. A mass DICK TRACY' (1937) Ralph Byrd Kay Hughes, Smiley Burnette fine condensation of one of the greatest sci-fi/crime serials eve lade. It's Dick against his brother, Gordon, who's under the hypnotic ontrol of a master criminal known as the Spider! From 16mm. \$208



FORGOTTEN HORROR WESTERNS

UNDER TEXAS SKIES (1930) Bob Custer, Bill Cody, Lane Chandler. A bizarre western thriller. Three cowboys try to stop a plot against an orphan girl. Watch out for the ape-like, mute giant who sadistically beats up and imprisons Cody. The fiend is photographed in a "horrfifc" lighting style to add to his sinister menace. 16mm. W186 GOD'S COUNTRY AND THE MAN (1931, Syndicate) Tom

Tyler, Gabby Hayes, Al Bridge. A tough lawdog is sent to a lonely town to bring in a powerful frontier gangster, who plays a death waltz on the violin just before slaying his victims. Lots of near-gothic interior shots of Bridge's crude, yet lavish saloon. Quite good. 16mm. W244



HIDDEN VALLEY* (1932) Bob Steele, Gertie Messinger, Francis McDonald. Bob and an old professor search for Hidden Valley, home o skull-worshippers and ancient treasure. The professor is soon nurdered and his map stolen. Bob tracks the killers night into Hidden Valley. An exciting climax features the Goodyear Blimpl 16mm W199 TOMBSTONE CANYON* (1932, KBS) Ken Maynard, Sheldon Lewis, Ceclia Parker. Ken drifts into town. On the way in, he hears the cry of the masked "phantom killer" of Tombstone Canyon-who also takes a shot at him. A creepy western horror film. 35mm. W003 RANDY RIDES ALONE (1934, Lone Star) John Wayne, George

Hayes, Alberta Vaughn. John rides up to a lonely saloon. A player piano can be heard within. He steps in and sees a grisly sight a bar filled with corpses! This weird western is quite good. 16mm. W078

filled with corpses! This weird western is quite good. 10mm 1000 BIG CALIBRE (1934, Supreme) Bob Steele. Peggy Campbell, Bill Quinn. A mad chemist kills Bob's dad with a poison gas bomb Bob searches the wastelands before finding the killer in a small town, wearing a sinister disguise and in cathoots with a local thug. The final chase between horse and automobile is superbl. From 18mm. W011 RAWHIDE TERROR (1934, Security) Art Mix. Ed Cobb. William RAWHIDE TERROR (1934, Security) Art Mix. Ed Cobb. William 1000 Big Calibration (1934) Big Calibratio

chase between horse and automobile is superbl. From 18mm. Will RAWHIDE TERROR (1934, Security) Art Mix. Ed Cobb. William Desmond. Two boys see their parents gunned down by bandits. The older boy's mind snaps. Years later, a wild-eyed funatic is on the prowl, savagely killing local outlaws. The killer wears a jagged strio of rawhide across his face and laughs maniacally. Weird. 16mm. W368. THE STAR PACKER* (1934, Lone Star) John Wayne, Verna Hillie, Gabby Hayes. Several sheriffs are slain, but no one can figure out who the mysterious sniper is, or even from where he fires his weapon. John comes into town to figure out the mystery, crossing paths with the murderous outlaw. The Shadow." 16mm. W077. DESERT PHANTOM* (1935, Supreme) Johnny Mack. Brown. Sheila Mannors, Ted Adams. Johnny rides to a lonely ranch were a phantom killer has murdered six ranch hands. He sees a ghostly figure wandering the grounds. Johnny eventually trails the killer to a secret mineshaft where he almost plunges to his death! 16mm, W117. RADIO RANCH (1935) Gene Autry, Frankie Darro. A Feature version of the Phantom Empire senal. The mad ruler of the underground kingdom of Murania threatens Gene and his pais. Lots of sci-fi action. Love those garbage can robots. 16mm. W119. BRANDED A COWARD (1935, Supreme) Johnny Mack Brown. Billie Seward, Syd Saylor. As a boy, Johnny witnesses the massacre

Billie Seward, Syd Saylor. As a boy, Johnny witnesses the massacre of his entire family by outlaws, but he does nothing even though he holds a gun in his hand. 20 years later he is known as a coward That is until an outlaw called "The Cat" comes to town 16mm W259



BIG BOY RIDES AGAIN (1935 Beacon) Guinn BIG BOY RIUES AGAIN (1930, but after his dad is shot connie Bergen, Guinn's heir to the family estate after his dad is shot by a masked killer. Who did it? An 'old dark ranch' forgotten horrors-style thriller, complete with learning chinamen, masked figures peeing transforms hidden cellars, etc. 16mm W241

style thriller, complete with leering chinamen, masked rigures peening through windows, secret trapdoors, hidden cellars, etc. 16mm W241 COURAGEOUS AVENGER (1935, Supreme) Johnny Mack Brown, Helen Ericson, Warner Richmond. A tough lawdog tires to Brown, Helen Ericson, Warner Richmond. A 1999 shipments crack a ring of desert bandits who are stealing gold buillion shipments. A bizarre, almost horrific twist has the bandits using wandering drifters for slave labor. One terrific scene has the half-mad captives revolting the state of the

for slave labor. One terminal manner Recommended. 16mm. W180 LIGHTNIN' BILL CARSON (1936, Puntan) Tim McCoy, Lois January, Rex Lease, Harry Worth. Tim grapples with several bad dudes, including the unruly Pecos Kid, who is eventually caught and hanged! Look out for the doom-foretelling death cards. If mm. W212 GHOST PATROL (1936) Tim McCoy, Wheeler Oakman, Claudia Dell, Criminals use a mysterious death ray to blast airplaines out of the sky. Tim steps in to try to stop their incredible scheme. A great combination of western and science fiction elements. 16mm. W079

the sky. Tim steps in to try to stop their incredible scheme. A great combination of western and science fiction elements. 16mm. W79 HAIR TRIGGER CASEY (1936, Atlantic) Jack Perrin. Betty Mack, Wally Wales, Victor Wong Jack's a city cop who comes home to his ranch, only to find himself up against a Chinese smuggling racket. A nice blend of yellow peril and western themes. 16mm. W250

RIDERS OF THE WHISTLING SKULL (1937, Republic) Bob RIDERS OF THE WHISTLING SKUEL (1937, Republic) Bob Livingston, Ray Corrigan, Roger Williams. A missing professor is found in the desert. He rants about the lost city of Lukachukai, a secret Indian cult, and an ancient curse. However, before he reveals the city's location, the lights go out and he is stabbed! Our heroes soon find themselves inside a giant skull-shaped temple, threatened by devil worshippers and a "living" mummy! A must! 16mm. W080 BORDER PHANTOM (1937) Bob Steele, Harley Wood, Don Barclay. A scientist is brutally murdered and his niece is kidnapped After being rescued, she is accused of the murder! Much of the action happens in a sinister hacienda complete with secret passage ways, hidden rooms, and mysterious Orientals lurking about the premises. What is the strange secret behind its walls? 16mm. W058

FORGOTTEN HORROR SERIALS

NOTE All titles in this section are just \$19.95 (unless otherwise noted), plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

PHANTOM OF THE WEST* (1931, Mascot) Tom Tyler, Dorothy PHANTOM OF THE WEST (1931, Mascot) form typer, concluding to 10 chapters. A small town is terrorized by an eerie, mast iller known as "the phantom." From a beautiful 16mm print. SL31.

KING OF THE WILD* (1931) Boris Karloff. 12 chapters. Lot man-eating lepers volcanoes, and jungle thrills. From 16mm, JO48.

HURRICANE EXPRESS* (1932) John Wayne. 12 chapters. he mad train wrecker". Uh-ohl 16mm. SL02 Jke's dad is killed by "the mad train wrecker Union Tollin John SHADOW OF THE EAGLE (1932) John Wayne. 12 chapters at of chills involving airplanes, death rays & a carnival. 16mm. SL01
THE WOLF DOG* (1933) Frankie Darro. 12 chapters. A thrilling land, sea and air From 16mm, SL27

MYSTERY MOUNTAIN* (1933) Ken Maynard, Jane Corwin, 12 napters "The Rattler" murders railroad crews out West, 16mm, SL28 THE WHISPERING SHADOW* (1933) Bela Lugosi, 12 THE WHISPERING SHADOW* (1933) Bela Lugosi. 1a napters Went goings-on in an enerie wax museum. 16mm. L003 THE THREE MUSKETEERS* (1933) John Wayne 12 chapters oreign legionnaires are pitted against "El Shaitan". 16mm. JR02 RETURN OF CHANDU* (1934) Bela Lugosi. 12 chapters. Our deo master comes from a rare beautiful onginal 16mm print. L004 THE LOST JUNGLE (1934) Clyde Beatty. 12 chapters. A circus unting expedition is stranded on an unknown island. 16mm SL04

nunting expedition is stranded on an unknown island 16mm \$L04 THE LOST CITY* (1935) Kane Richmond 12 chapters incredible lab scenes, black men changed to white, dwarfs changed into giants, a mesmenzing piece of pure camp. From 16mm. \$001



THE FIGHTING MARINES* (1935) Grant Withers 12 chapter sergeant invents a new "gyro-compass," which is coveted er criminal, "The Tiger Shark," and his gang. 16mm. SL34 THE PHANTOM EMPIRE* (1935) Gene Autry, Smiley Burnette. 2 chapters. This is the one that made Gene a star. 16mm. S004 THE MIRACLE RIDER* (1935) Tom Mix. 12 chapters. Tom

a forceful new explosive 16mm SL29 QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE (1935) Reed Howes 12 chapters. THE NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN* (1936) Herman B 2 chapters Tarzan battles a weird jungle tribe. From 16mm. SL11 THE CLUTCHING HAND* (1936) Jack Mulhall, Robert Frazer, Schapters A scientist discovers a formula for gold. 16mm. SL09
UNDERSEA KINGDOM* (1936) Ray Corrigan, Monte Blue. 12
napters. An underwater kingdom plans to attack the world. S007
SHADOW OF CHINATOWN* (1936) Bela Lugosi, Herman Brix. 5 chapters A madman tries to destroy Chinatown, 16mm, L010
DICK TRACY* (1937) Ralph Byrd, 15 chapters. A classic serial in Byrd as the definitive Tracy. Recommended: 16mm, SL12

For ordering information, go back 3 pages!

the HOUND

Join"The Hound for a little Millennial mauling while he celebrates New Year's with tidings of New Fears. Cheers!

Theatrical Thrills

FANTASIA 2000 animates IMAX movie screens worldwide during a four-month engagement starting on New Year's Day 2000. Originally planned to be a partial reissue of its 1940 classic, Disney has formed FANTASIA 2000 into nearly a brand new movie, adding seven new musical sequences and retaining only one original—Dukas' "The Sorcerer's Apprentice." Horror fans will lament the absence of Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain" with its Lugosi-inspired demon; in its place audiences will see Stravinsky's "Firebird," which aims to be equally demonic. After the eight-storytall IMAX version finishes its run in April, Disney may release FANTASIA 2000 to local cinemas.

Playing on normal-sized movin' pitcher screens in January is SUPER-NOVA (MGM/UA), with James Spader (STARGATE) and Robin Tunney (END OF DAYS) as spacefaring EMT medics trying to avoid a galactic Big Bang, stat. Action specialist Walter Hill (48 HRS) directs.

SCREAM 3 (Dimension) has been temporarily stifled until February, having been pushed back from its original December debut. This latest and presumably last installment from writer/ producer Kevin Williamson and director Wes Craven features a clutch of clever cameo appearances, including Carrie Fisher as a noted Hollywood filmmaker and Jenny McCarthy as a blonde. February also finds winsome Winona Ryder starring in LOST SOULS (New Line Cinema), where she's trying to keep handsome, brooding attorney Ben Chaplin (THE THIN RED LINE) from falling victim to a conspiracy to bring the Devil to earth yet again. Hasn't Old Scratch gotten tired of this since END OF DAYS?

Drowning in Draculas

Director F.W. Murnau's NOSFERATU, the 1922 German version of Dracula, remains after nearly 80 years one of the most powerful adaptations of Bram Stoker's most famous novel. Its vampiric villain, renamed Count Orlok, is one of the creepiest creatures ever committed to celluloid. The upcoming feature film BURNED TO LIGHT is a darkly fanciful fiction about the making of this early classic. John Malkovich stars as the gay Murnau, who in the interest of authenticity decides against hiring a mere actor for the lead role and instead employs real live (?) vampire Max Schreck (Willem Dafoe)

as his Nosferatu. Cary Elwes, Catherine McCormack, Eddie Izzard, and Udo Kier portray other (no doubt startled) members of the cast and crew. Avant garde writer/director E. Elias Merhige, creator of the disturbingly bizarre 1991 film BE-GOTTEN, directs this Lion's Gate release, which will see the light of day during the coming year.

Film editor-turned-director Patrick Lussier is set to direct DRACULA 2000, a modernization of Stoker's tale for Dimension Pictures. Executive produced by Wes Craven, it's part of a new feature film series he'll supervise for Dimension. Rookie director Lussier has been the film editor on five Craven films, and he debuted in

Blackie Lagoon struts his stuff-again?

the directing chair with PROPHECY III: THE ASCENT, which gets released directly to video in February. DRACULA 2000 is targeted for release next Halloween. No word on who will don Drac's trademark cape.

Columbia Pictures has purchased a script by first-time screenwriter Michael Valle titled SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE VENGEANCE OF DRACULA. If produced, the film will feature the Great Detective matching wits with the Prince of Darkness in fog-shrouded London. But

don't expect a Granada-style production. The planned mystery-horror tale would take a cue from Universal's summer 1999 hit THE MUMMY and attempt to include INDIANA JONES-style action and humor. Before you lunge for your seven-percent-solution in despair, note that director Chris Columbus, the screenwriter of the entertaining 1985 feature YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES (and director of the current Disney release BICENTENNIAL MAN) is being chatted up to develop the project.

Sherlock, Stock, and Barrel

And speaking of Baker Street's most famous residents—Sherlock Holmes, Dr. John Watson, and company are popping up in new productions in a multitude of media. The Hound will leave it to Scarlet readers to judge how apropos these appearances may be

Larry Cohen, scripter of B-movie faves IT'S ALIVE, Q: THE WINGED SER-PENT, and MANIAC COP, has sold a screenplay entitled CAST OF CHARAC-TERS to Centropolis Entertainment, producers of GODZILLA and INDE-PENDENCE DAY. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's characters figure in the plot of this Victorian thriller, but further details are presently shrouded in fog.

Sherlock and the good Doc do some time-travelling in the upcoming animated TV series SHERLOCK HOLMES IN THE 22nd CENTURY, which is coproduced by Scottish Television Enterprises and the Stateside producer/importers DiC Entertainment. Holmes and Watson are joined by New Scotland Yard Inspector Beth Lestrade as they battle evil scientists, super-villains, and crime czar Professor Moriarty, who seems to have hopped the same time machine as our heroes.

The volleyball game's afoot, Watson! ABC Television has ordered a pilot episode for a proposed new (live-action) series entitled HOLMES AND WATSON. Produced by Gary Fleder (director of the feature film KISS THE GIRLS) and W. Peter Iliff (screenwriter of PATRIOT GAMES), the series details the criber series applies of a present day Sher-

busting exploits of a present-day Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson as they follow clues on California's Venice Beach. Now pass the seven-percent-solution!

Music, Moriarty, please. HOLMES!, a stage musical by the Florida-based team of Brett Nicholson and Hans Vollrath, has been evolving over the last two years. The original book by Nicholson has Sherlock Holmes matching wits with his nemesis Moriarty, even as he re-

Continued on page 18



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THE BEAST FROM
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IT CAME FROM BENEATH
THE SEA

RICHARD VALLEY

EDITOR OF SCARLET STREET MAGAZINE

DOLORES FULLER

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NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 16

CELEBRIT

kindles a (previously undocumented) romance with a woman whose brother is in Moriarty's clutches. HOLMES! has been fashioned as a combination of music, mystery, humor, and horror that mixes newly created characters with stalwarts Dr. Watson, Inspectors Gregson and Lestrade, and the Baker Street Irregulars. Composer Vollrath and writer-lyricist Nicholson have been moonlighting from their Walt Disney theme park careers to continue the evolution of their show in workshops, staged readings, and concert performances. In 1999 a promotional CD album was recorded, which the creators hope will assist them in marketing their production. Excerpts from seven of the show's songs are available for download from their website at http://members.tripod.com/holmesthemusical/main.htm.

RECORDED

A Good Monster is Worth Repeating

As The Hound reported last time, Universal has unwrapped plans for a sequel to last summer's horror hit THE MUM-MY, with writer/director Stephen Sommers returning to lead the second expedition. Sommers expects the dusty doings this time to be more scary and less silly, but Universal isn't stopping its monster pageant there. Many more of its classic creatures are returning to the screen. James Jacks, coproducer of THE MUMMY and John Carpenter's VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED, is preparing a futuristically horrific update of BRIDE OF FRANKEN-STEIN. The title creation will be far from

the image of Elsa Lanchester in the 1935 original, according to Jacks. She'll instead be a complex, sympathetic character who becomes jealous of her creator's love for his much more human girlfriend. The design of Universal's new BRIDE will be carried off by none other than effects makeup titan Rick Baker.

Meanwhile, the Farrelly Brothers, auteurs of the calculatedly crass comedies DUMB AND DUMBER and THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY, are possible choices to direct Imagine Entertainment's sci-fi comedy INVISIBLE MAN, which may star Will (James West) Smith in the title role. And then there's the long-planned computer-animated version of FRANKENSTEIN, which has gotten a script rewrite from MUMMY master Stephen Sommers. He's added some lighter action elements to the darkly Gothic grue. Populating this animated canvas are the cadaverous Dr. Pretorius, the mysteriously hirsute Herr Rainer, a gnome named Novo, and the Monster itself, who reportedly sports a new, non-Karloffian look. But stop the presses: rumors are flying that Universal may have decided to grind this production to a halt—again. The Hound will keep his furry ear to the ground.

Deja Views

Bugged by unnecessary sequels? Here comes a new version of the 1954 gi-ant epic THEM, the best of the fifties big bug movies. George Lucas protégé Joe Johnston (OCTOBER SKY) may be taking the helm. The screenplay is by Mark Mont-

gomery, who previously penned the 1993 Rutger Hauer cable TV thriller VOYAGE ... Ålan B. McElroy, screenwriter of New Line's 1997 SPAWN feature and coproducer of the pay cable SPAWN series, will pen the script for the new version of JA-SON AND THE ARGONAUTS. Watch for the Argo to sail into view in 2000 Star-trekking space babe BARBARELLA will be back on the big screen in a new Warner Bros. feature, with Drew Barrymore starring as the titular heroine. The new film reportedly won't be based on the campy 1968 Paramount feature (which starred a pre-workout Jane Fonda), but will find a new campground based on the original French comic strip by Jean-Claude Forest. Producer Ben Myron, whose resume includes SHOW-GIRLS, THE MOD SQUAD, and BARN-EY'S GREAT ADVENTURE, is piloting this production, as well as another remake project: FLASH GORDON for Sony Pictures. But take heart—maybe Mr. Myron has lied on his resume like every-

Dammit, Janet! You're preggers! Actor/writer/composer Richard O'Brien (seen recently as the creepy Mr. Hand in DARK CITY) is concocting a sequel to his consummate cult hit THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. The as-yet-untitled opus has the original film's damsel-indistress Janet Weiss expecting a blessed event. But who's the dad? Brad? Frank? Riff Raff? Dr. Scott? Rocky?

The director/screenwriter of the Fall 1999 supernatural megahit THE SIXTH SENSE is scaring up a sequel. Disney is

paying M. Night Shyamalan a recordbreaking \$10 million to write and direct a followup feature, titled UNBREAKABLE. The new film will be in the same supernatural vein as THE SIXTH SENSE but won't be a direct sequel. Bruce Willis is again scheduled to play the lead role (but a different character). Production is scheduled to start in April, with Samuel L. Jackson costarring.

Scary Scuttlebutt

DC Comics' long-running horror anthology title House of Secrets has been in development as a Warner Bros. feature for over a year. Now, with fright films booming at the box office again, and with a new script by HALLOWEEN H20 screenwriter Robert Zappia, Warners may start construction on their HOUSE in the coming year.

More BATMAN 5 rumors are flapping about. Warner Bros. is supposedly considering two new directions for the Caped Crusader's next flight. The first possibility is an origin story based on comic artist Frank Miller's Batman: Year One graphic novel series, for which Warners may want Ben Affleck to star. The second scenario is a live-action version of the popular WB TV cartoon series BATMAN BEYOND, which features a 21st century Batapprentice fighting crime under the tutelage of a retired Bruce Wayne. Surfer dude turned action star Keanu Reeves is rumored to be sought for this one.

Now that Time-Warner seems close to a financial settlement with the heirs of SUPERMAN cocreator Jerry Siegel, Warners may resume activity on SUPERMAN LIVES, with William Wisher (TERMINA-TOR 2) as writer and Nicolas Cage back on track as The Man of Steel. Tim Burton, who had worked long and hard on this project, recently complained that the studio was more interested in merchandising than moviemaking. "I had to design characters for the Happy Meal before I could design the film," he griped.

Updates Aplenty

The DreamWorks/Warner Bros. coproduction of THE TIME MACHINE is still timed to start production this summer, but rumored director Steven Spielberg will instead step into an executive producer post. CITY OF ANGELS director Brad Silberling takes the reins . . . Simon West, director of the action dramas CON AIR and THE GENERAL'S DAUGHTER, has been contracted to develop and direct the long-awaited feature film version of the ITC TV series THE PRISONER. West, who in a published interview said he was an obsessed fan of the Patrick McGoohan series, promises that his film won't be a "cheesy remake."

Television Thrills

Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez, producers of the low-budget scare smash THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT, have been signed by the FOX network to create a spooky series entitled FEARSUM. A lucky 13 episodes have already been ordered by the network, sight unseen-sort of like the Blair Witch herself. The show's protagonist is an internet jockey whose website explores the strange and bizarre. (No shock there!) David S. Goyer, cowriter of the upcoming MISSION TO MARS, penned the pilot episode.

Meanwhile, all's not quiet on the West-ern front. JONAH HEX, the DC Comics Western noir title that debuted in the sixties in All-Star Western and Weird Western Tales, is in development at Warner Bros. TV as a weekly series for the Fox network. The aforementioned Robert Zappia is writing the script for the pilot episode. The title role of the scarred, gunslinging

anti-hero has yet to be cast.

With the exception of THE ODD COUPLE and M*A*S*H, most TV series based on big-screen movies sink quickly into obscurity. Nevertheless, a cluster of new TV projects based on feature films are in development. ABC has hired producer/director Thomas Carter (of MIAMI VICE) for a series based on DEVIL IN A BLUE DRESS, which featured Denzel Washington as novelist Walter Moseley's forties private detective "Easy" Rawlins . CBS and Warner Bros. Television are striving to revive THE FUGITIVE with a more action-packed pace to match the

Continued on page 21

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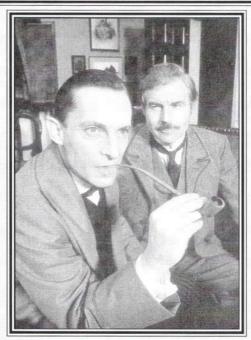
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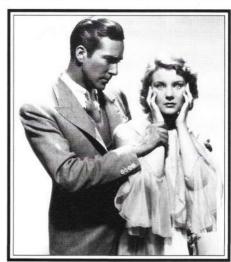
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Continued from page 19

Harrison Ford film version of 1993 . . . The Fox network is developing a series based on the Oscar-winning 1997 Curtis Hanson feature L.A. CONFIDENTIAL, which may star Kiefer Sutherland in the Kevin Spacey . THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR from MGM Television will continue the escapades and flirtations of millionaire Thomas Crown and detective Catherine Banning . . . And NBC is developing a series for SEINFELD's Michael Richards in which he will play a bumbling detective blatantly inspired by Peter Sellers' Inspector Jacques Clouseau.

Comet Schumacher

Joel Schumacher, prolific director of THE LOST BOYS and BATMAN FOR-EVER, will join forces on a television project with Mark Frost, coproducer of TWIN PEAKS and novelist of the Conan Doyle-inspired thrillers The List of 7 and The 6 Messiahs. Their new TV series for the CBS network concerns a cosmic battle between the forces of good and evil for the souls of humankind

Another Schumacher TV project in the works is a miniseries for Showtime based on the controversial British soap series QUEER AS FOLK. The highly-rated eight-part show, which aired on Britain's Channel Four early in 1999, followed the lives and loves of three gay Manchester men. The U.S. version will likely raise the age of the youngest of the trio from 15 to 18, to reflect Stateside proprieties, and set the show in Scarlet Street Country New Jersey. No word on whether director Schumacher will employ the writing talents of former DOCTOR WHO author Russell T. Davis, who scripted the British original.

The Home Video Vault

Universal Home Video continues its series of classic horror DVD releases in the New Year. Rising from his damp domain in May is the CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON (1954); materializing in June is Claude Rains as THE INVISIBLE MAN (1933); Rains returns in July, this time unmasked as the PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (1943); the Xenomorph crash surprise!—for a remake. lands in August in IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE (1953); and things get scare-ewey in September when ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN (1948). All the discs feature commentary tracks, newly-produced documentary featurettes, and other sinister surprises.

Already available on DVD: Warner Home Video's special edition of THE EX-ORCIST (\$79.98), which includes a CD soundtrack album, a commemorative book, eight miniature lobby cards, a free one-sheet movie poster offer, and other diabolical additions.

December laserdisc releases include: BLITHE SPIRIT (\$39.99), BRAIN DAM-AGE: SPECIAL EDITION (letterboxed, \$49.99), BURNT OFFERINGS (letterboxed, \$40), THE CAR: SPECIAL EDI-



Is it ANTS IN YOUR PLANTS OF 1939? No, it's THEM! (1954), due-surprise!

TION (letterboxed/AC3, \$49.95), HOR-ROR OF THE BLOOD MONSTERS: SPE-CIAL EDITION (letterboxed, \$49.95), MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE (starring Val Kilmer, \$40), and VAMPYROS LESBOS (letterboxed/subtitled, \$39.99).

TARZAN (Buena Vista) swings into home video stores on VHS (\$26.99) and DVD (\$39.99) in February; the DVD collector's edition (\$49.99; with director's commentary, a history of Tarzan, and behind-scenes extras) will be available on March 21.

Fearsome Flotsam

More murderous melodies from Monstrous Movie Music will be available

Continued on page 73

A Study in Celluloid

A Producer's Account of Jeremy Brett as Sherlock **Holmes**

By Michael Cox

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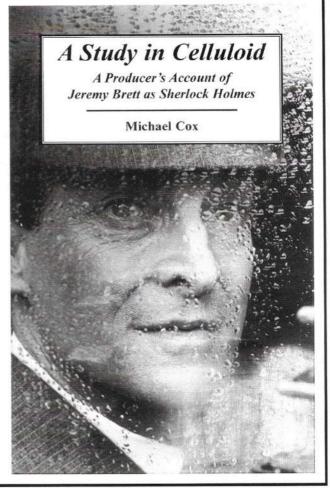
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Scarlet Street's DVD and Laser Review

ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS Universal Studios Home Video DVD, available in box set only

The Master of Suspense's centenary has brought about a wealth of his films to DVD, most notably the appearance of BON VOYAGE and AVENTURE MAL-GACHE (both 1944), Warner's STRANG-ERS ON A TRAIN (1951) with both the U.S. and U.K. endings, Criterion's glorious editions of THE 39 STEPS (1935) and THE LADY VANISHES (1938), and Universal's special editions of VERTIGO (1958) and PSYCHO (1960). While the remainder of his Universal films still await a DVD release (hopefully with the same grand presentation as the first two), the studio has tossed into the mix a nice little disc containing four of the 20 episodes Hitchcock directed for television's AL-FRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS (October 2, 1955-September 6, 1965).

By the mid-fifties, Hitchcock was already known as the King of Screen Suspense, but he was eager to expand to other mediums. The Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine had just begun publication when Lew Wasserman, Hitch's friend and former agent as well as head of MCA, urged him to create a television series ala CLIMAX and PHILCO TV PLAYHOUSE. Hitch needed some convincing. Television was still looked down upon by the film industry and he feared that his image would suffer if he indulged in the rival medium. Hitch was made the proverbial offer-he-couldn't-refuse: for introducing each episode, approving each story, and directing episodes at his leisure, Hitchcock received \$129,000 per episode, and all rights to the show would revert to him after the initial airing. (He would later trade the rights to ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS and ownership of PSYCHO to MCA for 150,000 shares of the company's stock, making him its fourth largest shareholder)

ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS set a few precedents in TV history: it was the first series to feature a prominent Hollywood director in both name and as a regular host (not to mention having such future notable directors as Sydney Pollack, Robert Altman, and William Friedkin helming episodes), the first series to regularly have the cold-blooded murderer as the hero, and the first series to cross the uncrossable line by insulting the sponsor. At first, Hitch's skewering of his sponsors infuriated his targets; however, as their sales rose, they not only tolerated, but happily accepted, his mockery.

The ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS disc begins with a thud—a long collage of current film clips leading up to the Universal logo—but once the self-hype is over, the fun begins. The first episode is a fantastic adaptation of Roald Dahl's classic short story "Lamb to the Slaughter." Shot over February 18 and 19, 1958, and broadcast on CBS April 13, 1958, the 106th episode is one of the best remembered in television history. Barbara Bel Geddes' turn as the housewife who snaps is a fabulous twist on the Ozzie and Harriet archetype that was prevalent at the time.

"The Case of Mr. Pelham" follows (though it is actually the 10th episode of the series, shot over three days in October 1955 and broadcast December 4, 1955) and is the gem to discover on this disc. The story of a plain, orderly man whose life is being taken over by an exact double contains many elements (the loss of identity, founded paranoia, etc.) that appear in Hitchcock's features. Tom Ewell gives a dazzling performance as the classic Hitchcock hero slowly losing control over his life. Of the episodes presented here, "Mr. Pelham" is the most Hitchcockian.

"Banquo's Chair" (shot on March 25 and 26, 1959, and broadcast as the 146th

episode on May 3, 1959) is a ghost story that time has not been particularly kind to—it's solid and well told, and the acting is strong, but the final twist has been so overused that when it comes, it almost seems like a punch line to an old joke. However, "Banquo's Chair" does have something that is definitely worth checking out in its introduction: Hitchcock as a big game hunter, extolling the dangers of the darkest jungles of Hollywood.

The disc concludes with "Back for Christmas" (shot in January of 1956 and aired as episode 23 on March 4th), a nice bookend with "Lamb to the Slaughter," as it features John Williams as a husband who murders his wife. The twist is pure Hitchcock and a complete delight even

after 40 years.

All of the episodes except "Back for Christmas" have previously been released on VHS on the now out-of-print BEST OF ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRE-SENTS VOL. ONE. The master prints are in very good shape (although the stock footage in "Back for Christmas" stands out), but the audio inexplicably drops for the second and fourth episodes. Universal has supplemented the disc with English and French subtitles and a French audio track. With luck, Universal will jump on the classic TV bandwagon begun by the TWILIGHT ZONE and AVENG-ERS DVDs and continue to release more episodes of this important series.

—Jeff Allen

THE LAST MAN ON EARTH/ PANIC IN YEAR ZERO! Image Entertainment Four Sides CLV Laserdisc, \$39.98

Image Entertainment has unleashed a laserdisc double-bill combining two apoc-



alyptic AIP sci-fi dramas. The first, THE LAST MAN ON EARTH (1964), is chiefly remembered as a Vincent Price vehicle. Based on Richard Matheson's 1954 novel / Am Legend (which I've never read), the film chronicles the gloomy existence of Robert Morgan (Price). Morgan is apparently the only uncontaminated survivor of a mysterious plague. He uncomfortably shares his desolate environment with the less fortunate: a race of quasivampires who attempt to kill him when darkness falls. His idyllic white picket fence belies a house well fortified with garlic, mirrors, and wooden stakes.

Following a lengthy flashback delineating the tragic events that have led Morgan to his predicament, he unexpectedly encounters a homeless woman, Ruth Collins (Franca Bettoja). Their uneasy alliance is terminated when Ruth's comrades, a secret society of partially-infected survivors, murder him in a church. It's a frustrating denouement, because Morgan never attempts to inform them that he has possibly found the cure for their vam-

piric plight.

Neither this version, nor the 1971 updating under the title THE OMEGA MAN, has enjoyed the lofty reputation attributed to Matheson's book. Some find Price miscast as the titular Everyman, but I rather enjoy his restrained enactment. After all, his character has submerged his own emotions as a device for coping with the inevitable nocturnal assaults. Morgan behaves dispassionately in the execution of his daily duties, only allowing himself an occasional nostalgic moment. Price's laconic, detached portrayal contrasts mightily with his concurrent image from Roger Corman's Edgar Allan Poe series for the studio. In this film, he seems more irritated than terrified by the vampires, a quality that failed to endear it to contemporary audiences

THE LAST MAN ON EARTH was financed by Robert Lippert in Italy for budgetary reasons. The production reveals minor flaws, such as occasional day-fornight inconsistencies and continuity errors. (A corpse laid head first into the back of Morgan's car has inexplicably reversed its position by the time Morgan arrives at a cremation pit.) I do wish that Lippert had borrowed AIP's penchant for unspooling the credit crawl after the picture's conclusion; the lack of supporting actors' names specified at the beginning might have preserved the illusion that Morgan truly represented the last

human man on Earth.

The laserdisc's 2.35:1 presentation displays much more of the visual imagery than any previous VHS release. Rather than the usual parade of forced-perspective closeups of Vincent Price, the cinematography better depicts the emptiness and depletion of his surroundings. The print's focus and B&W contrasts are fine, justifying the notion that the film may have been an influence on George Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968). Rarely are there speckles or arti-

facts apparent. The moody Paul Sawtell/Bert Shefter score is isolated sans sound effects on the analog channels.

The disc's cofeature, PANIC IN YEAR ZERO! (1962), depicts a protagonist far more passionately involved in his struggle to endure a catastrophic event. Harry Baldwin (Ray Milland), accompanied by his wife Ann (Jean Hagen), son Rick (Frankie Avalon), and daughter Karen (Mary Mitchel), flees Los Angeles as the city is devastated by an unspecified nuclear attack. Their odyssey to a remote vacation spot forces them to reluc-

tantly become survivalists. Fisticuffs and gunplay become the trademarks of their trek. When radio broadcasts eventually recommend that citizens return to their homes, the family understands that civilization as they knew it will need to be rebuilt along with the damaged cityscapes.

Ray Milland also directed the production, acquitting himself admirably in both capacities. The pace is well balanced: the first half is a tension-filled "road rage" thriller in which the simple act of crossing a highway becomes a dangerous undertaking. The latter portion segues into a "hold the fort" drama, as the Baldwins sequester themselves in a cave and defend their territory. The cast members give believably understated performances. Their characters always question the moral implications of their actions, but never appear sanctimonious.

Even the shocking rape of Karen by itinerant thugs is handled tastefully by the director. However, the production's only over-the-top element, Les Baxter's brassy jazz score, manages to simultaneously sensationalize and trivialize the girl's misfortune. The loud music creates a distraction throughout the film, clashing with Milland's tasteful conception. Baxter's compositions graced many AIP efforts, but this particular score sounds as though it was intended for an entirely

different project.

The laserdisc restores PANIC IN YEAR ZERO! to its original CinemaScope proportion of 2.35:1, offering considerably more visual detail than the Orion videocassette. Since numerous scenes were shot at outdoor locations, the widescreen resolution better represents the director's staging of the family's arduous journey. The vintage materials are in great shape. Although occasional artifacts crop up, the print is free of speckling and markings. Black and white contrasts are sharply detailed. The only extra is provided on the analog tracks, with the isolation of that bombastic Les Baxter score accompanied by various sound effects. Rather a dubious supplement, but perhaps the music might be more entertaining if divorced from the sober work it accompanies. It might even suggest the stylings of a forgotten beatnik/JD platter of period jazz.





THE TRIP
Orion Home Video
Two Sides CLV
Laserdisc, \$29.99

If you're searching for a drug movie with the right credentials, look no further than THE TRIP. This 1967 American International Pictures release stars Peter Fonda, features Dennis Hopper, and boasts a screenplay by none other than Jack Nicholson. Somehow you know with these seminal counterculture names of that era, there is going to be some authenticity in this journey through one man's acid trip on LSD.

Nicholson did, in fact, admit to having based his concept on his own experiences, experimenting with the mindblowing hallucinogenic while going through a messy divorce from actress Sandra Knight. Jack had further hoped to play one of the major parts in the film, but, at this point in his career, he had not quite reached the superstardom that would arrive within a few years. Producer/director Roger Corman opted for Bruce Dern instead, who here plays the role of Fonda's bearded guide through his first mind expansion in a surprisingly straightforward, subdued manner.

The title of the film is straight to the point, for this is not a conventionally plotted film that goes in for much exposition or background. After a brief prologue in which we establish that Paul Groves (Peter Fonda) is a television commercial director waiting for wife Sally (Susan Strasberg) to sign the divorce papers to put an end to their marriage, we get right into THE TRIP itself.

John (Bruce Dern) brings an eager Paul to a groovy hippie pad somewhere in the Los Angeles area, where dealer Max (Dennis Hopper) is passing a joint while talking about his own experiences with LSD. Paul, who is taking the journey for "insight," is given three tabs of the mindaltering drug and told by John to "turn off your mind . . . relax and . . . float down stream" in a direct nod to John Lennon's lyrics to "Tomorrow Never Knows."

In no time Paul is having visions of himself running on the beach in a shirt with puffy sleeves, while hooded figures ride on horseback. A blonde woman (Salli Sachse) keeps showing up in his visions,



opening the possibility for a relationship outside of his failed one with Sally. In one of the movie's most striking sequences, Paul rolls naked in bed with Sally one minute and the blonde the next, as a strobe light of colorful designs bathes their bodies. Through a series of quick cuts and uninhibited camera angles, acting as a form of subliminal censorship, Corman gets away with certain shots that he might have had to edit if photographed in a more direct, routine fashion.

The initial trip leaves Paul exhilarated, frightened, and very anxious to continue to journey. What's more, to prove he is gaining some of that "insight" he sought so badly, he finds a lot to get excited about over an orange he has found in John's pad! In time the visions get stranger, as Paul sees himself hanging in a closet, hears a cackling crone, and watches a dwarf tending a cauldron. Most upsetting of all, he finds himself strapped to a makeshift electric chair in a room that seems to have been decorated by Peter Max. There Max, in judge's robe and ending most of his sentences with the word "man," accuses him of selling out in his career choice, as a dwarf rides on a carousel while saying things like "Bay of Pigs!"

Paul is soon hightailing it out of John's place and taking off down the Sunset Strip, where he passes such landmark sights as the Bullwinkle Moose statue. He ends up at a laundromat, where he finds great pleasure in a washing machine, envisions naked women tumbling in a dryer, and scares the hell out of a patron (Barboura Morris). A stop at a discoteque is highlighted by Luana Anders as a nononsense waitress who asks Paul "Isn't the real world good enough for you?" Then, just to emphasize the grooviness of the environment, cameras tilt at wild angles while colors, shapes, and painted designs ripple across the torso of a topless go-go woman, giving one the impression that we are watching an R-rated version of ROWAN AND MARTIN'S LAUGH-IN.

Paul finally ends up back in the sack with the blonde, their lovemaking intercut with a stunningly rapid montage (by Dennis Jakob) of most of the events of the film so far. In the end, there is a highly abrupt and unsatisfying resolution on Paul's part and not much dramatic substance on which to formulate an opinion. Since so little background is given on Paul, there is not much in his trip that seems personalized or explanatory of his behavior. Things are not helped by Fonda's hopelessly wooden and often amateurish emoting, which makes the character much less compelling a person to spend this journey with than Hopper, Dern, or Nicholson might have made him.

Fonda himself was not especially pleased with the finished product, feeling Nicholson's more far-out vision had been compromised by self-

proclaimed square Corman in hopes of securing a hit. (The movie did, in fact, do quite nicely at the box office.) In retaliation, he and costar Hopper came up with a premise for their own project about a pair of motorcyclists making their way across a hostile America—and the rest is history. THE TRIP, in fact, gave Hopper a chance to exercise his directorial ambitions, as he filmed some footage uncredited once Corman had left in order to begin another project elsewhere. Also of interesting behind-the-scenes note is the name of Ronald Sinclair as editor, he being credited as one of AIP's resident cutters on several productions of that era. Prior to his career in the editing room, Sinclair had worked as a child actor, chalking up such roles as the jockey Mickey Rooney feverishly tries to depants (trust me on this one!) in THOR-OUGHBREDS DON'T CRY (1937), the imprisoned Prince Edward in Universal's TOWER OF LONDON (1939), and the young Ronald Colman in THE LIGHT THAT FAILED (1939).

As a followup to THE TRIP, Nicholson wrote another drug-related script, PSYCH-OUT (1968), this time being allowed to play a part in the movie as well. (Corman handed the directorial reigns over to Richard Rush.) Strasberg was back, for a more substantial role, as was Dern. Of course, once Fonda and Hopper got their own pet project greenlighted, Nicholson landed a supporting role and the finished result, EASY RIDER (1969), became one of the landmark films of the sixties, making Nicholson one of the greatest of all modern-day stars.

The Orion laserdisc of THE TRIP (credited on the disc itself to MGM) disappoints in failing to letterbox the image. It contains no extras and very little in the way of liner notes. The packaging not only opts for a black and white cover, but does not bother to reproduce the colorful original movie poster that assured movie-

goers that if they attended this film they would "feel purple" and "taste green." The print, except for the occasional scratch line, is acceptable though not as bright and vibrant as one might have expected of a movie full of psychedelics. The side change comes at an appropriate point, as Fonda dashes out of the laundromat. With the slam of the door behind him comes the break. When we resume on Side Two, he is on the run on Sunset Boulevard.

THE TRIP, though the cause of some controversy at the time (it was banned in England), and a groundbreaker of sorts in its day, has pretty much faded out of the memory and plays now only as a curious and ultimately unfulfilling artifact. Of amusing interest is the opening crawl at the beginning of the film, explaining that the movie is a dramatization of the dangers of drug use ("a shocking commentary on a prevalent trend of our time and one that must be of great concern to all"), giving one the mistaken impression that it is an antidrug film. Anyone in the know, especially those who had hung out with Fonda and company at the time, couldn't help but laugh at this insincere introduction to what is clearly a motion picture very much advocating LSD use.

-Barry Monush

THE WOMAN WHO CAME BACK Image Entertainment DVD, \$19.98

Three hundred years ago, the small New England town of Eben Rock was the site of "the black terror," the branding of innocent women as witches. Presiding over their prosecution was the vile Judge Elijah Webster, who condemned 18 wrongly-accused women to death. One "witch" in particular cursed him, and now, centuries later, the judge's great granddaughter three times removed, Lorna Webster (Nancy Kelly), has come back to town.

A chance meeting with a sinister old woman (Almira Sessions) claiming to be the deceased witch, followed by a freak bus accident in which only Lorna survives, convinces Lorna that she may indeed be cursed. A whispering campaign from a jealous barmaid (Ruth Ford) who appears to have incestuous designs on her brother (John Loder) further alienates Lorna from a village already predisposed to dislike her. Pretty soon, seemingly innocent incident after incident adds up to create the illusion that the naive young woman is being punished by supernatural forces for the activities of her distant ancestor. In fact, the movie piles so many subtle incidents on top of each other, it's easy for the audience to fall prey to the same hallucination as the townspeople. Fish die, a child falls mysteriously ill, a doll vanishes and reappears in the unlikeliest of places . . .

Too bad associate producer and director Walter Colmes didn't make more horror movies. Under his capable direction, THE WOMAN WHO CAME BACK

(1945) is a vibrant film, following closely the pattern established by such Val Lewton productions as CAT PEOPLE (1942) and THE SEVENTH VICTIM (1943). The picture is full of great sequences (Lorna



wandering through a graveyard at night, a woman pursued by an unseen specter, trick-or-treaters playing games before a fire) that create an eerie, forboding sense of quiet horror. Additionally, there is Colmes' flawless sense of editing, which carries one suspense-filled scene into the next with laudable aplomb. Cameraman Henry Sharp's photography perfectly captures the brooding atmosphere in every shot, whether it's rain falling on a lake or clouds passing over a lonely treetop. Convincing performances from Kelly and Loder add to the terror, as does credible miniature work.

The movie isn't perfect. It has some overblown moments, especially when the child (Jeanne Gail) first seeks refuge with the suspected witch and then runs screaming in fear at no provocation. But all in all, THE WOMAN WHO CAME BACK is a superior product from poverty-row studio Republic.

While Image Entertainment's disc has no extras to recommend it, it does offer a relatively clean-looking and generally speckle-free transfer that's far better than other poverty-row chillers the company has to offer (STRANGLER OF THE SWAMP, THE MASK OF DIIJON, and THE FLYING SERPENT, all 1946). At a mere 68 minutes, it should fit into anyone's busy schedule.

—Chris Workman

STRANGLER OF THE SWAMP Image Entertainment DVD, \$19.98

Generally regarded as the bottom rung of independent studio production, Producers Releasing Corporation (PRC) occasionally sired such unforgettable offerings as Josef von Sternberg's THE SHANGHAI GESTURE (1941), Edgar Ulmer's BLUEBEARD (1944), and Frank Wisbar's eerie, stylish STRANGLER OF THE SWAMP (1946). A 58-minute programmer, STRANGLER provided writer/ director Wisbar (1899-1967) with the opportunity to recreate FÄHRMANN MAR-IA ("Ferryboat Pilot Maria," 1934), a romantic fantasy he directed in Germany before emigrating to America in 1939. Unlike more successful refugees such as Robert Siodmak and Fritz Lang, Wisbar returned to filmmaking in Germany after World War II.

A nameless, fog-shrouded hamlet is haunted by the wrathful ghost of ferryman Douglas (Charles Middleton), who was hanged for a murder he didn't commit. Joseph (Frank Conlan), who testified against him, has taken over the coveted position as ferryman, only to meet a violent end. Joseph's granddaughter, Maria (Rosemary La Planche), returns to the village and inherits the job (which now even the town fool won't take). When Maria falls in love with Christian Sanders, Ir. (23-year-old Blake Edwards), son of the village elder who helped railroad Douglas, the spectral Strangler sets his sights on the young man. As in F. W. Murnau's NOSFERATU (1922) and Fritz Lang's DER MÜDE TOD (DESTINY, 1921), deliverance from evil can only be found through sacrifice.

The use of a dark, otherworldly setting to embody the villagers' guilt and despair bears the imprint of Wisbar's background in German Expressionism. In Wisbar's hands, the studio-created swamp becomes a lightless, Stygian realm; even the daylight scenes are steeped in the forlorn shades of twilight. Glass paintings and artful framing of foreground elements create a deep-focus look unique in the PRC canon.

STRANGLER OF THE SWAMP breaks with Hollywood convention by presenting a resourceful female protagonist who rescues the male lead from peril. A former Miss America, Rosemary La Planche radiates confidence and capability as ferrywoman Maria. (Wisbar used her again in 1946's routine DEVIL BAT'S DAUGHTER.) Future director Edwards essays a bland but affable character-

ization in the mode of CAT PEOPLE's Kent Smith (whom he resembled at the time). Middleton, Ming the Merciless in Universal's FLASH GORDON serials, projects a glowering, if excessively corporeal, presence as the Strangler.

While reasonably free of scratches, the print is soft, with some shots severely out of focus. Sprocket hole wear occasionally causes the picture to jerk, and the soundtrack suffers from motorboating and speed variations. Unlike many of Image Entertainment's recent cult movie DVDs, STRANGLER is presented without

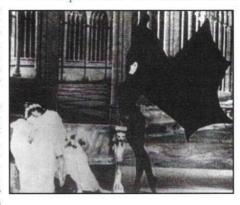
any supplementary features. This omission is unfortunate, as little has been written about the film or its director.

-Michael Draine

LES VAMPIRES Image Entertainment Eight Sides CLV Laserdisc, \$124.98

It's a world of paralyzing nerve agents, secret code books, hypnotic powers, and clever disguises. It's not Sherlock Holmes or James Bond, though—it's the seldom seen 1915 French masterpiece LES VAM-PIRES! Written and directed by Louis Feuillade, this 10-part serial containing humor, horror, and mystery has been carefully restored by David Shepard of The Film Preservation Associates.

Admittedly, I found the first episode slow at first and I was disappointed to learn that there are no actual vampires, but as I spent more time in Feuillade's



surreal criminal world it became increasingly fascinating and addictive. Investigative reporter Phillipe Guerande (Edouard Mathe) is relentless as he works hand-in-hand with the police to uncover the masterminds behind a deadly cult of criminals known as "The Vampires." His sidekick is the silly but good-natured Mazamette (Marcel Levesque), whose playing to the camera you'll find either annoying (as I did during the first three episodes) or amusing (the remainder of the episodes). The two most fiendish characters our heroes battle are the darkhaired seductress Irma Vep (Musidora aka Jeanne Roques) and the charmingly cunning Moreno (Fernand Hermann).

Vep is one of the strongest, most fully realized female characters in early cinema, and easily one of the most enjoyable villains to watch, as she uses every skill at her disposal—sexual allure, smarts, and sheer will power—to succeed where her male counterparts fail. Of all the members of the the Vampires, she alone survives each battle to continue the reign of terror. Moreno is equally engaging, his boldness and trickery recalling that of Sherlock Holmes' nemesis, the evil Professor Moriarty.

One of the delights of this restoration is the amazing use of color tinting. There are more shades and hues than I've ever seen utilized before, and Feuillade's blue-

tinted scenes of dark-hooded figures prowling in the night are particularly memorable. Also impressive are the easily readable title cards and the digital correcting of the film speed to eliminate the jerkiness often seen in silent films. Overall, the print quality is remarkably clear. I only noted a few instances in which the contrast washed out the details of faces or where print wear was distracting.

Good news for DVD fans: David Shepard is working to obtain recently discovered footage that, if better in quality, may be included in a future DVD release.

-Michael D. Walker

DICK TRACY COLLECTION The Roan Group Archival Edition Two Discs/Four Sides DVD, \$49.98

The Roan Group has released another knock-vour-socks-off DVD collection of classic films, further placing them in the sacred realm of The Criterion Collection and Elite Entertainment for presenting definitive editions of classic films. Like Elite's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (1968) and Roan's own WHITE ZOMBIE (1932), the four RKO Dick Tracy films have been readily available for years in scratched and ragged public-domain prints from a variety of sources. The new DICK TRACY COLLECTION renders all previous versions obsolete. Newly remastered, the films are taken from near pristine 35mm elements and have never looked this good. The sound is clear and crisp, the pictures are sharp, the blacks far deeper and truer, and the framing much better, offering more information on all four sides than even the two VCI/Image double-feature laserdiscs from 1991. All four films feature great menu screens, with elements from the original poster art, and have supplemental screens with the cast and credits for the featured film.

The DICK TRACY COLLECTION is presented over four sides of two double-sided discs—odd, since the films average 62 minutes each, and they could have easily been presented on one double-sided disc (the Morgan Conway side and the Ralph Byrd side) and saved the extra cost of a second disc and double-snap case. But this is a very minor complaint.

Side One presents the first feature film to star Chester Gould's popular comic hero: DICK TRACY, DETECTIVE (1945). Although Ralph Byrd had already starred in four Dick Tracy serials and was (like Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes) the living embodiment of Tracy for the public, RKO cast B-movie actor Morgan Conway in the role. A much darker and far more grave Tracy than Byrd, Conway perfectly captured the seriousness of Gould's comic-strip hero. In this outing, Tracy is out to nab escaped murderer Splitface (beautifully played by Mike Mazurki), who is on a mission to kill the members of the jury that put him away. Shot with film noir trappings, the picture showcases the more realistic, front-page style of villain that Gould originally inked. Splitface has no brainwashing machines, giant flying planes, or henchmen at his disposal; he's simply an extremely dangerous, knife-wielding individual with a single goal. DICK TRACY, DETEC-TIVE also offers an excellent secondary audio track with Max Allan Collins, who took over writing the DICK TRACY comic strip from Chester Gould in 1977. Collins' very engaging commentary is extremely informative about the history of Dick Tracy and Gould. (For instance, he tells us that Jack Webb based DRAGNET's Joe Friday on Tracy.) Unfortunately, he rarely speaks about the movie you are watching, only occasionally referencing things happening on screen. Regardless, Mr. Collins is a veritable fountain of information and his sheer enthusiasm for the topic makes this track enjoyable.

Side Two presents not one, but two Tracy adventures: DICK TRACY VS. CUEBALL (1946) and the absolutely fabulous radio show, DICK TRACY IN B FLAT (February 15, 1945). In Conway's second and final outing, he is on the track of title character Cueball (Dick Wessell), who is strangling the members of a diamond heist group that betrayed him. While CUEBALL offers more comedic relief (in the form of Ian Keith's picture-perfect Vitamin Flintheart) and more great names (antiques dealer Percival Priceless and precious gems dealer Jules Sparkle), the noir atmosphere of DETECTIVE remains intact. Cueball's strangulations (by a

leather strap worn on his hat) are shown in shadow, but such violence as his onscreen beating of Filthy Flora (Esther Howard) is front and center. The Morgan Conway Tracy films have a depth and weight absent from the Byrd serials and films and don't deserve to be neglected. Conway and his costars take their characters to heart and present them in a very realistic manner, making them less comic-strip characters and more the noirish denizens of Chandler's classic mean streets. On the other end of the spectrum, Side Two contains the wonderful "Com-

mand Performance" Armed Forces Radio Service broadcast of DICK TRACY IN B FLAT OR FOR GOODNESS SAKES, ISN'T HE EVER GOING TO MARRY TESS TRUEHEART? Billed as "The First Comic Strip Operetta," DICK TRACY IN B FLAT features the biggest radio stars of the forties in one of the funniest radio shows ever produced. Bing Crosby is Tracy and Dinah Shore is Tess, and they are joined by Bob Hope as Flattop, Frank Sinatra as Shakey, Jimmy Durante as The Mole, Judy Garland as Snowflake, Frank Morgan as Vitamin Flintheart, Cass Daley as Gravel Gertie, and The Andrews Sisters as The Summer Sisters. Everybody associated with this production is obviously having a fantastic time (Judy Garland and Bob Hope break up several times) and their enthusiasm is very infectious. Made at the height of Tracy-mania, this lighthearted show pokes fun at everything in the strip from the marriage gag to the pure-heartedness of Tracy. It's a gem of a show and an inspired supplement to this set. The sound shows its age, but not a joke, laugh, or ad-lib is lost.

Side Three marks the return of Ralph Byrd to the role in DICK TRACY'S DI-LÉMMA (1947). RKO was conscious of the young, Saturday matinee fan base for Byrd's Tracy and toned down the violence. Still packing a scary wallop and noir trappings, DILEMMA features the clubfooted villain The Claw, who kills his victims with the steel hook he has in place of his hand. For DILEMMA, a new director took over the reigns and it shows. John Rawlins, known for his action-driven vehicles JUNIOR G-MEN (1940), THE GREEN HORNET STRIKES AGAIN (1940), and SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE VOICE OF TERROR (1942), sped things up and delivered some great set pieces, building up to a great chase at DILEMMA's climax. This film also features another full-length commentary by Max Allan Collins, but it's more of a mixed bag. Still focusing on the strip (and books he has published), Collins seems strained and a bit self serving. He still packs in a lot of information, but much is rehashed from the first commentary. By the middle of the film, he seems to have lost focus and turns to the battles over his novelization of Warren Beatty's DICK TRACY (1990) and the arguments he had with editors over the script. Direct info on the films in this package would have been much more appropriate.

The final side of the collection features the RKO Tracy film most people have seen: DICK TRACY MEETS GRUESOME (1947). Originally announced as DICK TRACY MEETS KARLOFF, the King of Horror asked that his name be removed from the title and RKO complied. Karloff plays Gruesome, who steals a nerve gas from L.E. Thal (Edward Ashley) that freezes humans in their tracks. The most comic of the four films, GRUESOME is very much in the vein of the serials: a lot of action, fast comedy, and a very speedy plot. After GRUESOME, Byrd would go

on to star in the short-lived (and now mostly lost) DICK TRACY TV series. The supplements on this side features another Tracy adventure, the complete four-chapter radio adventure "The Case of the Man with the Yellow Face." This 1938 story picks up with Tracy and Pat in London searching for the title character. Unfortunately, due to its poor quality, this is the weakest element of the set. The sound is extremely muffled and very hard to understand without cranking the volume and treble way up. Side Four also features an "interview with Chester Gould" sort of. When this option is selected, Max Allan Collins explains that the extensive interview, which he personally recorded, has been lost and what remains is a snippet from the interview used in a television news report on Gould's death. The audio portion from the news broadcast is then played.

The Roan set is glorious and highly recommended to fans of Tracy, forties noir, or great Saturday matinee films. The supplements are wonderful and loads of fun. The only thing missing is a set of trailers for each picture and a section featuring the colorful publicity artwork and lobby cards. Still, this is an excellent

box set.

-Jeff Allen

PHOTOGRAPHING FAIRIES **Image Entertainment** Two Sides/CLV Laserdisc, \$29.98

Before directing NBC's exercise-incomputer-generated-effects, ALICE IN WONDERLAND (1999), Nick Willing made (and wrote with Chris Harrald) this wonderful little film about a man coping with the death of his wife and the existence of fairies. PHOTOGRAPHING FAIR-IES (1997) is also a treat for Sherlockians in that is has not one, but two previous screen Watsons, one playing Sir Arthur Conan Dovle, and stars the son of Sir Robert Stephens, who played the Great Detective in THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (1970)!

PHOTOGRAPHING FAIRIES begins in 1912 with photographer Charles Castle's (Toby Stephens) wedding and the death of his wife the next day. After her death, his life becomes an empty search for a reunion with her. He becomes a coroner's photographer during World War I, and after, sets up shop with his partner Roy (Phil Davis), specializing in trick photography (like putting the face of a couple's dead son in a picture with them). To drum up business, he goes to The Theosophical Society and promptly exposes a fraudulent fairy picture, much impressing Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Edward Hardwicke, Jeremy Brett's second Watson) and Beatrice Templeton (Frances Barber). Mrs. Templeton later seeks Castle's help to explain a photograph she took of her daughter with a fairy. Convinced the photograph is genuine, he goes to her country home to find the actual fairies in the picture.



Through numerous uses of slow motion, nicely edited dream sequences, and a memorable, music-box-like score from Simon Boswell, Nick Willing creates a charming and magical world in PHOTO-GRAPHING FAIRIES. John de Borman's excellent photography, filled with sweeping crane and steadicam shots, gives it a surreal, storybook feel.

Willing uses special effects very concisely, never allowing them to swamp the story, while still giving us a satisfying look at Ron Mueck's innocent, yet erotic, sprites. One of the best effect scenes has Castle entering "slow time" and running to see the fairies.

Ben Kingsley (Dr. Watson in 1988's WITHOUT A CLUE) gives a potent performance as the powerful town preacher, who is the suspicious husband of Beatrice Templeton and Charles Castle's nemesis. His every line is spoken with the softness of a country parson, but weighted with the deadly seriousness of a man threatened by possible loss. Emily Woof also scores as Linda, the Templetons' housekeeper and baby-sitter, though the character would have benefited from far more screen time. As the death-obsessed photographer, Toby Stephens is excellent. His transformation from lost widower to truth-seeking fanatic to enlightened soul is subtle and expertly delivered.

Image Entertainment's disc is in CLV (a shame since the fairy effects would have been nice to study frame by frame) and has a decent 22 chapter stops. The picture is framed at approximately 1:85, but looks a bit tight around the top and right edge. The disc is completely void of supplements (would a trailer really have killed them?), and the brief synopsis on the back of the handsome jacket is not only questionable. (Castle is not a specialist in exposing fraudulent spiritualists, he a specialist in trick photography.) The notes also wrongly list Emily Woof as Beatrice Templeton. Regardless, PHOTO-GRAPHING FAIRIES is a very good little fantasy that comfortably joins SIRENS and LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE in the magical realism department.

-Jeff Allen

-THE MAN WITH THE X-RAY EYES Orion Home Video Two Sides CLV Laserdisc, \$29.98

Roger Corman's X—THE MAN WITH THE X-RAY EYES (1963) plays like a cautionary fable concerning man's desire to test the limits of scientific exploration. Dr. James Xavier (Ray Milland) is developing an X-ray vision serum. Facing the spectre of budgetary cutback, he accelerates the procedure by having doses applied directly to himself. Resultingly, he can soon see through paper, clothing, and human tissue. Dr. Sam Brant (Harold J. Stone) is accidently killed while attempting to halt his colleague's research.

Heretofore a modern mad scientist tale, the film takes an abrupt turn as Xavier decides to go on the lam. With the help of Crane (Don Rickles), a sleazy oceanside carnival barker, he reinvents himself as the mind-reader Mentallo. The scientist remains incognito in an emperor-yellow satin robe resplendent with astrological symbols. Always the opportunist, Crane realizes that Mentallo's act is simply too good to be fake. Thus, he launches a new scam in which he promotes the doctor as The Healer.

Xavier's friend, Dr. Diane Fairfax (Diana Van Der Vlis), eventually locates him



by deducing The Healer's true identity. Together, they flee to Las Vegas in search of easy money. The scientist, unfortunately, has gradually lost control of his serum-induced vision. Following a car accident, he stumbles to a revival meeting. The reactionary preacher admonishes him to pluck out his eyes as atonement for his blasphemous claims of having seen the center of the universe. The humbled Xavier complies, begetting the film's famous freeze-frame fadeout.

X-THE MAN WITH THE X-RAY EYES isn't a classic, but it is an entertaining meditation on science taken to its logical extreme. Director Corman keeps the pace lively in the second half. Art director Daniel Haller's seedy carnival and Healer sets are smallish, conveying the claustrophobic lifestyle of Xavier's flight. Only the casino set fails to provide verisimilitude; the many curtains adorning the walls suggest the ambience of a funeral home rather than a glitzy gaming establishment. The special effects modestly represent the doctor's hyperactive evesight, betraying the production's medium-low budget. One is reminded of Corman's admission that he experimented with LSD to prepare THE TRIP (1967). Perhaps the director derived inspiration from this earlier effort.

Ray Milland is forceful as the beleaguered protagonist. His performance captures the haunted quality of the dialogue. (A blonde at a party tells him "I like men who look urgent.") The character is capable of good works, such as aiding the sick at the risk of exposing himself. But he's also no saint, lowering himself to Crane's hustles when money and anonymity beckon. Milland portrays Xavier sympathetically, but without resorting to self-pity. The supporting cast, peppered with cameos by Corman regulars Dick Miller, Jonathan Haze, and Barboura Morris, is equally up to the challenge.

Image Entertainment's laser transfer is acceptable, if a tad disappointing. The original Pathecolor has faded somewhat, and the print suffers periodic speckling and stray scratches. Fleshtones appear off-color in several scenes. The aspect ratio has been modified to full-frame, sacrificing a skosh of peripheral detail. Side Two is pressed in the CAV format, but boasts no trailer preview. The music and effects tracks have been isolated on the analog channels, but you practically need to possess X-ray vision to discover them, as there are no notations to that effect on the packaging.

-John F. Black

PREHISTORIC WOMEN **Anchor Bay** DVD, \$29.95

The January 25, 1967 Variety review of PREHISTORIC WOMEN begins: "A sadistic fantasy, PREHISTORIC WOMEN may be of interest to the masochistic filmgoer, but as general entertainment fare it is dubious material, and parents should be warned to keep their children away from it." If only the film would raise such emotions in 1999! After 33 years, this slight effort from the great Hammer Studios could hardly be called sadistic, but the material is certainly dubious.

The plot runs thus: While hunting a tiger in Africa, David Marchant (Michael Latimer) crosses into the forbidden Land of the White Rhinoceros and is abducted by the local natives. After a prolonged tribal dance scene, he is taken to the Great Rhino statue and is told the legend of how the land and people are cursed

and only the return of the rare White Rhino and the destruction of the false god statute will free everyone. As he is about to be run through for his crimes, he touches the horn of the statue and, in a flash of light, everything freezes and the wall in front of him parts to reveal a hidden valley!

While he investigates the new world, a curvaceous blonde, Saria (Edina Ronay), sensibly clad in jungle leather and fur bikini, collapses in front of him. Trying to assist, he is quickly captured by a band of tough brunettes (similarly clad) and taken to Oueen Kari (Martine Beswick), who is naturally bathing in the spring. She takes a fancy to David, but he will have none of her because she and her band of brunettes



cruelly dominate the band of blondes. The spurned Queen throws our hero into a cave with the male slaves, who spend their time diligently at the bellows. Saria finds David and tells him to pretend to have the hots for the Queen. Then, in his new position (!), he can help the slaves.

I'll stop the synopses here so as not to blow any of the surprises the film has to offer (and not to bore the 99.99% of you who have figured out the rest of the plot.)

In addition to their celebrated sci-fi and horror films, the House of Hammer began a series of "primitive epics" after the phenomenal success of ONE MIL-LION YEARS B.C. (1966), including THE VIKING QUEEN (1967), THE GEANCE OF SHE (1968), and WHEN DI-NOSAURS RULED THE EARTH (1970). PREHISTORIC WOMEN stars two-time Bond girl (1963's FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE and 1965's THUNDERBALL) Martine Beswick, who had just come off ONE MILLION YEARS B.C. Michael Carreras (grandson of Hammer founder Enrique Carreras) often wore multiple hats on such Hammer productions as CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB (1964) and THE LOST CONTINENT (1968), and served triple duty on PREHISTORIC WOMEN as director, producer, and writer (under the pseudonym Henry Younger). Carreras' script is leisurely paced and rather incoherent, but is filled with several unintentionally (?) amusing plot points and scenes: The women despise the men, yet they worship an animal with the largest phallic symbol in the land; when one of the blonde slaves is offered as a bride to the black devils, she straddles the giant rhino statue as each girl parades and

bows before her. SLAVE GIRLS, the original British title, is more accurate than the American title, since there is nothing to indicate that the story takes place in prehistoric times.

Anchor Bay has given PREHISTORIC WOMEN a gorgeous transfer, retaining its original 2.35:1 ratio and mono sound. The film looks and sounds incredible. The supplements include a splendid letterboxed trailer, as well as two B&W television spots. An episode of the documentary series THE WORLD OF HAMMER entitled "Lands Before Time" is also included. Unfortunately, it is a clip-a-thon rather than an actual documentary, shedding no light at all on this subgenre or Hammer's take on it.

-Michael Draine

THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK Image Entertainment/MGM Three Sides CLV Laserdisc, \$39.95

Writer/director Randall Wallace follows BRAVEHEART with the final adventure of D'Artagnan and the Three Musketeers. THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK is a lush, romantic adventure filled with deception. political intrigue, forbidden romance, honor, and duty. Up until now, most bigscreen adaptations of the Musketeer adventures have emphasized either the comedic or the swashbuckling aspects of the stories—Michael York pratfalling his way after Christopher Lee, and Douglas Fairbanks or Gene Kelly gracefully vanquishing the villains with elaborate swordplay. Wallace, however, keeps much of the same atmosphere as in his script for BRAVEHEART; that of non-forced humor, realistic fights, and a serious tone. Realism reigns, swashbuckling is out (in fact, Wallace says on the commentary track that he banned the use of the word swashbuckling on the set).

Briefly, the story follows Porthos, Athos, and Aramis (all retired and dealing with their personal demons) as they try to replace the extremely self-serving King Louis XIV with his imprisoned twin (the man in the iron mask), the good and caring Phillippe. Their old comrade D'Artagnan-now Captain of the Musketeers and confidant of Louis-must choose between his devotion to his friends and his oath of

loyalty to the king.

As a first-time director, Wallace was fortunate to have not only a clear vision of exactly what he wanted, but a cast second to none (regardless of the fact that only two principals have French accents). Gerard Depardieu is a wonderful Porthos. His feeling that he has lost his importance in life prompts many of the comedic tension breakers, but Depardieu wisely doesn't overdo it. Jeremy Irons deftly conveys Aramis' piety, his grounded intelligence, and the adventurous heart of a Musketeer. Gabriel Byrne's D'Artagnan (reminiscent of Sean Connery's Robin Hood in 1976's ROBIN AND MARIAN), successfully matures the screen image of the most famous Musketeer. His life has been filled with secrets and emotional

tragedies, and Byrne brilliantly presents all of these hardships. Seeing John Malkovich as anything other than the villainous Valmont, or any of the other acidic antagonists he plays so well, is initially difficult. Fortunately, his Athos seethes with torn emotions and loyalties and his performance adds layers of depth to every line. DiCaprio plays the young Louis XIV as an egotistical and pompous ruler, and also manages to create a very likeable and identifiably different Phillipe.

The MGM Home Entertainment disc presents the film in a balanced 1:85 ratio over three sides, with well chosen side breaks. An audio commentary by Randall Wallace is included as a supplement. While his delivery is quite deadpan and over-complimentary to the actors, he does have numerous interesting anecdotes about the actors' different approaches to their roles and how he fought for some of his scripted scenes to be filmed. Two supplements are included on Side Three (erroneously listed on the jacket as being in CAV). The original trailer is interesting in that it contains two scenes that emphasize the swashbuckling comedy elements Wallace tried to avoid: after slicing through food thrown at him, D'Artagnan tosses off, "I'm on my way to a salad," and Porthos gets hit in the eye by bird droppings. Indeed, when these respective scenes appear in the movie, it is difficult to imagine these shots in them. Finally, a visually fluffy piece on the designing of the iron mask shows a few early concepts, but tends to repeat them to fill out the commentary length. All in all, a nice streamline presentation of an excellent debut film.

—Jeff Allen

THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN Warner Brothers Two Sides CLV/CAV Laserdisc, \$34.98

In 1957, Hammer Studios produced its first in a long series of period horror films for which the studio would become world-renowned. THE CURSE OF FRAN-KENSTEIN was released to hostile critics (it was branded by one as being "for sadists only"), who were put off by the film's (then-) graphic violence and adult themes. Audiences, however, had a different opinion altogether, and the film grossed a whopping \$8 million at the box office, officially putting Hammer Studios on the monster map.

While treading familiar territory, Hammer's retelling of Mary Shelley's novel still manages to inject a fresh perspective on the legend. Imprisoned for murder, Baron Victor Frankenstein (Peter Cushing) sends for a priest (Alex Gallier) to hear his confession before being led to the guillotine. Believed by all to be a raving madman, Frankenstein hopes he can find someone who will believe and tell his story with credibility. He begins his tale, and we are taken, flashback-style, to the Frankenstein Manor on the day Victor's mother died, leaving him sole heir to the family fortune. After being assured that the allowance his late mother paid would continue, Victor's aunt attempts to introduce her daughter Elizabeth as a possible candidate for marriage to the 15-year-old Baron. Victor shows no interest whatsoever (it seems difficult for him to simply maintain polite tones), and shows them the door

A tutor by the name of Paul Krempe (Robert Urquhart) arrives, sent for by Victor under the guise of his deceased father. Within two years, the brilliant young student has learned everything that Paul has to teach, and the two continue their studies together, eventually leading them to focus on one solitary scientific goal. (Try to guess!) After a dramatic montage of big scientific doohickey usage (accompanied by a seriously annoying electric static noise), the two scientists successfully revive a cute li'l dead puppy. There follows much rejoicing and back-patting. Dogooder Paul is immediately ready to reveal the wonderful discovery to the medical federation, wanting to use it for saving people's lives and other boring stuff. Victor, however, never satisfied with mere mortality, comes up with the more environmentally-conscious idea of recycling dead bodies to make brand new people.



(Now that's <u>really</u> giving something back to the community!)

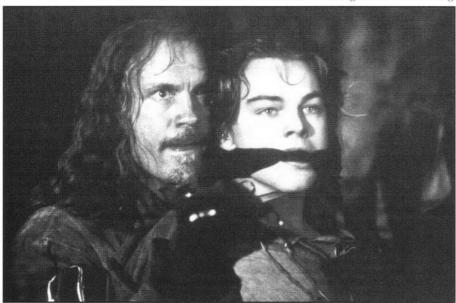
The obvious next step is to go corpsefetchin', which is just what they do, in classic nighttime cut-down-the-hangedman-from-the-gallows-in-the-desertedmiddle-of-town fashion. They bandage up the body, and accommodate it nicely in a very impressive tank. Victor abruptly announces that he's leaving town, promising an explanation upon his return. While he's gone, cute cousin Elizabeth (now all grown up into Hammer hottie Hazel Court) shows up to stay at the manor as the Baron's new "arranged" fiancé! Victor returns shortly thereafter, taking the time out of his busy schedule to acknowledge Elizabeth's presence before rushing Paul off to show him his new acquisition: the hands of Bardello, the world's greatest sculptor, who recently died in Leipzig. Paul is mortified, and demands they discontinue the experiment. The Baron refuses, and Paul moves out.

After a time, Victor sends for his former tutor to show off his work, which Paul finds just a wee bit horrific. ("This can never end in anything but evil!") Victor is of the opinion that if the brain is good then so's the body, and all he's missing now is the right brain.

Mere nights later, Victor and Elizabeth entertain a dinner guest, Professor Bernstein (Paul Hardmuth), who (by sheer coincidence) happens to possess "the greatest brain in Europe." When the Professor decides to retire for the evening, the Baron leads him upstairs, where an unfortunate accident occurs....

After Bernstein's funeral, Frankenstein raids the crypt and extracts the great brain. (Crypts offer such ideal conditions for surgery, no?) Unfortunately, Paul shows up, determined to stop his mad student. The jar containing the brain is smashed in the struggle, and the enraged Baron flees with his damaged prize. Never one to be hindered by such minor setbacks, Victor extracts the broken glass and successfully uses the brain to bring his creation to life. But apparently, a tenderized brain is not recommended for such procedures, and the Creature (Chris

Continued on page 72



Gods, Monsters, and a Blushing B1198!

by Ken Hanke

Il right, so we already were awarded those amazing DVD releases of FRANKENSTEIN (1931) and THE MUMMY (1932), but that wasn't the end of the story at all. Now Universal has opened up their pits of hell to bring us James Whale's masterpiece, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1935) in this new format, complete with another splendid documentary (thank you, David J. Skal!) and an absolutely marvelous audio commentary by Scott MacQueen. In nearly every respect, they have done the film proud and, if the results are not quite as eye-popping as before, it must be noted that BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN has always been in better shape than its early talkie brethren. Even so, the image and sound on this new release is probably about as definitive as it gets, and I defy anyone to tell me they ever saw the wealth of detail that's offered in this release! (More than one person, on recently hearing that Una O'Connor plays the maid leading the Borzois out of the room in the prologue, raced to their tape or laser of the film, only to

conclude, "You know, I think it is her." With the DVD, it's very clearly the woman herself.)

Ironically, Whale's monstrous masterpiece was neither his personal favorite of his films (that honor appears to have been afforded either 1933's THE INVIS-IBLE MAN or 1935's REMEMBER LAST NIGHT?), nor a film that he even wanted to make. This may prove that artists are not always the best judges of their own work. There is probably no film of the thirties that contains so much of its creator's personality-no, not even the obsessively personal Sternberg/Dietrich films offer a clearer portrait of the artist behind them. (Brilliant though 1934's THE SCARLET EMPRESS dom's most bizarrely touching scenes. in which Catherine reviews the

troops, casting her eyes in a suspiciously southerly direction as she . . . sizes up each man.)

For all its brilliant cinematic fireworks, BRIDE is ultimately the work of a great raconteur telling his guests a wild and wooly tale on a stormy night, as is evidenced by the prologue with Mary Shelley (Elsa Lanchester). "I feel like telling it. It's a perfect night for mystery and horror. The air itself is filled with monsters." That Whale allowed himself to be represented by Shelley is evidenced by the fact that the recapping of her novel isn't her novel at all, but Whale's film! It's a tale told by a man with a great flair for the dramatic, the comic, and the theatrical. That he tells his tale with striking imagery, fluid camerawork, brilliant acting, and one of the greatest musical scores in the history of film, matters not. The end result is still that of a charming host holding his guests enthralled.

So much ink has been spilled on BRIDE OF FRANKEN-STEIN that it is difficult to imagine that more can be said, yet it never wears out its welcome or the capacity for further discussion. The reason, of course, is how very personal the film is, and the fact that it is layered with meanings and possible meanings. Whale, the man who almost singlehandedly created shock horror with his in-your-face cutting and tendency to show what his predecessors only suggested, stood his own genre on its head with BRIDE. The studio wanted a horror film that could be marketed as a Whale/Karloff/Frankenstein movie, and while Whale gave them just that, he did so on his own terms. In two instances-the opening in the flooded basement of the burntout windmill and the Monster's apparent attack on the

shepherdess-Whale deliberately cut away as an expression of his own boredom with thrills for their own sake. At the same time, as Scott MacQueen points out, he fashioned a film with an almost astronomical body count (21 corpses in all!), much of which, at the insistence of the properly horrified Breen Office, was either removed or softened. (The corpses of the Neumanns, for instance, were given overdubbed moans in postproduction, suggesting that they weren't quite ready for the coroner.)

Anyone disappointed by the way in which the FRANK-ENSTEIN DVD documentary downplayed (or avoided) the homosexual subtext inherent in all of Whale's work will come away from the BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN documentary, SHE'S ALIVE, much more satisfied. Whale's gayness and the gay sensibility in his films is here discussed openly and intelligently. Though it doesn't go nearly as far as it might have about what BRIDE, intentionally or not, has to say on the topic, it doesn't shrug it off as so many reticent

commentators have been guilty of doing in order to keep Whale's work "safe." The documentary isn't likely to frighten the horses with its conclusions, but it may cause some worry for those who think subtext is a dirty word.

Those same viewers are probably going to be equally distressed by the DVD release of GODS AND MONSTERS (1998), writer/director Bill Condon's brilliant and beautifully moving adaptation of Christopher Bram's novel, Father of Frankenstein (Dutton, 1995), a fictionalized account of the last days of James Whale. While not perhaps in quite the same league as Whale's classic-and risking the wrath of Universal purists-this, more OF FRANKENSTEIN as a double feature. If BRIDE is the work of

Whale the raconteur, GODS AND MONSTERS is the story of that same raconteur at twilight, the man being brought to startling life by Sir Ian McKellen in one of filmdom's great performances. The DVD presents the film perfectly—letterboxed to its proper 2.35:1 ratio, with beautiful color saturation, and boasting flawless Dolby 2.0 Surround that perfectly captures ever nuance of the brilliantly delivered dialogue, as well as Carter Burwell's remarkable and moving score.

McKellen may not be James Whale and Bram's story (originally called a rather "cheeky" idea by Whale's good friend, director Curtis Harrington) may be something of a shaggy-gardener story, but the resulting film offers a compelling, vivid impression of Whale, one that captures so much of the essence of the man that it seems pointlesseven stupidly counterproductive—to fault the film on the basis of historical inaccuracy. Condon's film isn't a collection of facts, but rather an attempt to create a portrait that reaches its central truth through the use of fiction. Considering Whale's own sense of the dramatic and the fact that he reinvented and romanticized himself and his past throughout his life, it seems a concept of which its subject might well have approved. It is life transformed into myth, and the myth seems to shed more light on Whale the man and Whale the artist than would have been likely with a strictly factual approach.

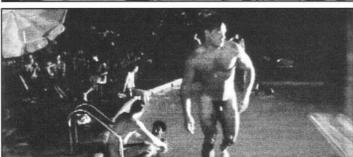
At first glance, Condon's decision to make the film in widescreen seems a curious one. Whale, of course, always worked in the old 1.33:1 Academy ratio, but Condon's statement that he wanted to make a film as much as possible like



they are, they aren't anywhere Holding hands at midnight, 'neath the starry sky near as much fun as BRIDE, ex- the Monster (Boris Karloff) courts the BRIDE OF than FRANKENSTEIN, is the percept perhaps for the scene in FRANKENSTEIN (Elsa Lanchester) in one of film- fect companion piece to BRIDE







ABOVE: Hunky gardener Clayton Boone (Brendan Fraser) poses for retired movie director James Whale (Ian McKellen) in the riveting GODS AND MONSTERS (1998), written and directed by Bill Condon. LEFT TOP TO BOTTOM: Elsa Lanchester (Rosalind Ayres) and Ernest Thesiger (Arthur Dignam) trade quips as Whale prepares them for filming on the tower set of BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN; a scandalous nude swimming party at James Whale's; Lanchester and Whale at George Cukor's garden party; Clay meets Boris Karloff (Jack Betts) at Cukor's party; the Frankenstein Monster appears in a sudden flash of lightning.



pressed in his use of flash cuts, sound montages, and his own <u>impression</u> of a Whale inspired moment: the shattering scene in which the object of Whale's attraction, Clay Boone (Brendan Fraser), leads the aging filmmaker onto a Whalean Expressionist WWI battlefield to join those who literally died there with him. This is Condon at his best, true brilliance and inspiration—not an attempt to be Whale, but to be Bill Condon as he has been, in part, formed by Whale's work.



The genius of GODS AND MONSTERS is infused with the genius of James Whale in that the film, like Whale's work, moves effortlessly between moments of nearly heartbreaking drama and outright, often quirky, comedy. (Drama? Who among us with an artistic bent cannot relate to Whale's statement about his family: "I was an aberration in that house—a freak of nature. I had imagination, cleverness, joy. Where did I get that? Certainly not from them. They took me out of school when I was 14 and put me in a factory. They meant no harm. They were like a family of farmers who had been given a giraffe and don't know what to do with the creature except to harness him to the plow." Comedy? Who among us with an artistic bent does not recognize himself when Whale, on the flimsiest artistic pretext, convinces Clay to shed his hampering things and expose some flesh?) But perhaps the most striking such moment in the film comes when Whale's housekeeper, Hannah (Lynn Redgrave), grieves over her master's drowned corpse, tenderly kissing him, only to matter of factly plunge him back into the pool, noting that she means no direspect, but that he "will keep better in water." Surely, surely, this laugh on top of a tear is a moment that would have been prized by Whale, who in REMEMBER LAST NIGHT? had police photographer E.E. Clive opine, "It would make a better composition if you were to move the head of the corpse a little to the right."



So settle back and watch a master storyteller tell his greatest, most outrageous fairy tale, and then follow it up by spending some time with the storyteller himself. A better evening is hard to imagine. And in so doing, take care not to deprive yourself of Bill Condon's lively and pertinent commentary on the latter film, nor the equally fine documentary, THE WORLD OF GODS AND MONSTERS: A JOURNEY WITH JAMES WHALE. There is so much to savour in both these films and presentations that it's nothing less than an embarrassment of riches.

one from the era (1957) in which the action takes place clarifies the choice. Moreover, it proves a wise choice. Condon is clearly an admirer of Whale's work and, just as clearly, he has been influenced by it, but he is not out to emulate Whale. Condon's own style is actually quite different and the one time—a dream sequence—in which he actually does copy Whale's style is one of the movie's less successful scenes. Condon's own style is much better ex-

All

Putting on the Dog The Thin Man on TV

by Drew Sullivan

Phyllis Kirk, who played Nora Charles on television's THE THIN MAN, insists they liked each other. Sam Marx, the executive producer, said, "Peter may have dis-liked Asta, the dog, but he sure as hell disliked Phyllis more. He had the gall, really, to come to me one time in his typical abrasive way and say, 'Why am I tied to the hip with this dame? Get rid of her. Kill her off and I'll hold the show.'" (The Peter Lawford Story, Patricia Seaton Lawford with Ted Schwarz, Carroll & Graff, 1988) Director John Newland said, "He was never bad to her. He was never rude to her. He could never tell me why he hated her, because she was good, she was never unprofessional." (The Peter Lawford Story) Peter Lawford's personal manager and closest friend, Milton Ebbins, said, "Everybody else thought Phyllis was sensational on the show. She got a lot more publicity than Peter ever did, and the sponsor told Peter that without Phyllis there'd be no show. So he had no choice. He backed off." (Peter Lawford: The Man Who Kept the Secrets, Bantam, 1991)

Appropriately, the question remains shrouded in mystery, a tantalizing puzzle to this day. Did Peter Lawford, who played Nick Charles to Phyllis Kirk's Nora, hate his lovely costar—and if so, why? If it's true, it didn't show on camera—which was lucky, because THE THIN MAN was beset by enough problems during its

brief history on the air.

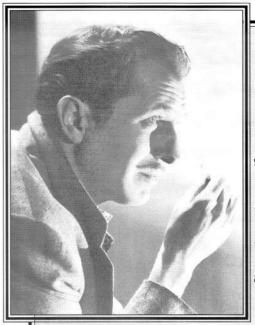
For starters, the original Nick and Nora, William Powell and Myrna Loy, were a pretty tough act to follow. The two stars were Hollywood's vision of the perfect married couple in a series of six movies based on Dashiell Hammett's last novel, The Thin Man (1934): THE THIN MAN (1934), AFTER THE THIN MAN (1936), ANOTHER THIN MAN (1939), SHADOW OF THE THIN MAN (1941) THE THIN MAN GOES HOME (1944), and SONG OF THE THIN MAN (1947). Additionally, they were paired in such popular dramas and screwball comedies as MAN-HATTAN MELODRAMA (1934), EVELYN PRENTICE (1934), THE GREAT ZIEGFELD (1936), LIBELED LADY (1936), DOUBLE WEDDING (1937), I LOVE YOU AGAIN (1940), LOVE CRAZY (1941), and THE SENATOR WAS INDISCREET (1947). There was no possible way to erase the memory of Powell and Loy, so both Lawford and Kirk chose to ignore their predecessors and forge new interpretations. Instead, thanks to the scripts thrust upon them, they came very close to imitating a couple of THIN MAN imitators: namely, MR. AND MRS. NORTH! (There was at least one other pair of husband and wife sleuths, Francis Crane's Pat and Jean Abbot, but they are all but forgotten today, even though they appeared in 26 books and, briefly, on radio.)

Pam and Jerry North had been created by Richard Lockridge for a series of humor pieces published in *The New Yorker* in the early thirties. Later, when wife Frances found herself stuck for characters in a murder mystery she was writing, Richard suggested the Norths as pro-

tagonists. The result was *The Norths Meet Murder*, published in 1940. Pam and Jerry lived in New York's Greenwich Village, where Jerry was a book publisher and Pam a scatterbrained snoop. The characters went on to appear in 26 books (tying with the Abbots), on Broadway, on the screen in a film version of the play (1941, with Gracie Allen as Pam), on radio (from 1942 to 1954), and finally on the boob tube (from 1952 to 1954, with Richard Denning and Barbara Britton).

Hammett's Nick Charles didn't have to work. A former detective of Greek extraction (that changed when Powell was given the role), he married the wealthy Nora and devoted himself to managing her extensive business interests—that is, when he wasn't dragged by wife or circumstance into solving a fresh series of murders. Nick also devoted himself to drinking, and Nora was more than capable of running a close second in the martini sweepstakes. None of this would do for TV, of course. So, in the twinkle of an executive decision, The Charles clan (which, of course, included their wirehaired terrier, Asta) moved to Greenwich Village and Nick found honest work with a publishing firm. And they drank coffee. Lots and lots of coffee





CRACKS IN THE MASK

Victoria Price writes a loving but hard-hitting biography of her famous father, Vincent ...

Interview and text by Richard Valley

A man who limits his interests, limits his life.

—Vincent Price

Vincent Price, art collector. Vincent Price, gourmet cook. And of course, Vincent Price, horror icon. It's all been said before, and his legion of loyal fans love him for it. But what about Vincent Price, anti-semite? Vincent Price, friendly witness? Vincent Price, three-times-married bisexual?

Has the beloved star of LAURA (1944), HOUSE OF WAX (1953), THE FLY (1958), THE HAUNTED PALACE (1963), WITCHFINDER GENERAL (1968), and THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES (1971) been dealt the low blows afforded Joan Crawford by daughter Christina, Bette Davis by daughter B.D. Hyman, Bing Crosby by son Gary? No, not at all. In this instance, the author is a loving daughter devoted to her father's memory. She is also, much to the dismay of those for whom knowledge is pain, not power, scrupulously honest.

Consider: in the advance uncorrected proof of *Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography*, Victoria Price writes about her father's strong attachments to gay men in the England of the early thirties, and society's oppression of homosexual relationships:

"In an age when such proclivities constituted a criminal offense, affairs were conducted with the greatest discretion, even secrecy. While there is no evidence that Vincent himself entered into any homosexual relationships at this time, he was undeniably intrigued by and drawn to these men intellectually and, on occasion, emotionally."

The two sentences are supercharged, the first seeming to offer an explanation for the lack of proof provided by the second. They are a clear indication that there is often fire where no smoke is in sight. However, in the final text, published by St. Martin's Press this past November, the second sentence is nowhere to be found. Instead, there is the following:

"In an age when such proclivities constituted a criminal offense, affairs were conducted with the greatest discretion, even secrecy; however, Vincent not only was unjudgemental about the lifestyles of these men, but he also was undeniably intrigued by and drawn to them intellectually and, on occasion, emotionally."

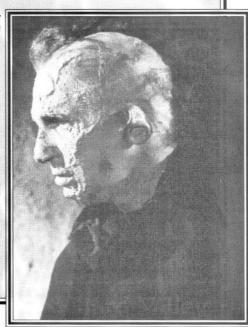
In an exclusive interview with *Scarlet Street* shortly before her book's publication, Victoria Price, who came out publicly in the November issue of *The Advocate*, offered this explanation for the change: "I cut it because I

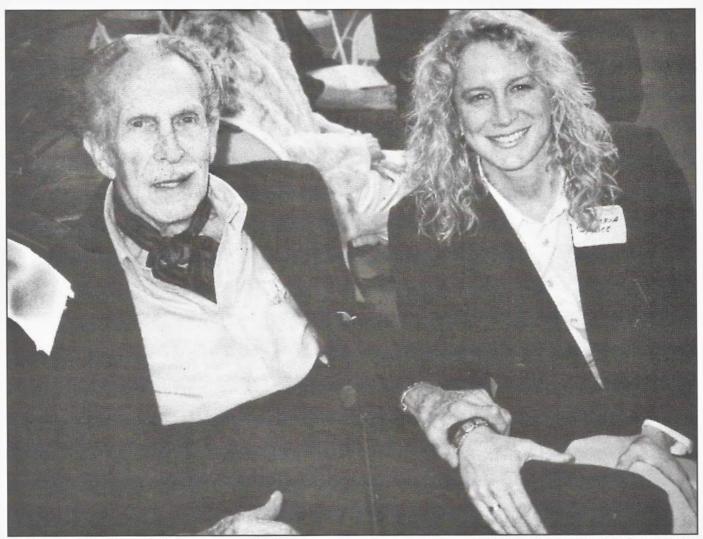
felt that it implied I knew something, and I didn't. It sounded like I was hiding something. And so I changed it, because I really wasn't hiding anything and it sounded like I was saying that this was a possibility—when in fact I never found anything definite from that period of time at all."

It was not for lack of trying. When Victoria decided to write her father's life, she determined to tell the full story—or as much of it as she could uncover—and not churn out just another whitewashed memoir of half-truths, selected facts, and evasions. The result is one of the best biographies ever written of a horror-film icon, one that leaves all other profiles of Vincent Price incomplete and unworthy of their subject.

Victoria was determined to explore more than just the "official image" of Vincent Price, movie star. "I have to say that I read Lucy Chase Williams' book on my father as a resource for his horror films, and one thing that was problematic for me, as somebody who knew him, is that Lucy has the attitude toward my father that so many of his fans have, that he could do no wrong. I felt that he had more shades of gray to him than people who didn't really know him thought, more shades than he liked people to know about."

liked people to know about."
The Williams book, The Complete Films of Vincent (Citadel, Price Press, 1995), concentrates the bulk of its text on the actor's movies, but boasts a 50-page biographical sec-tion titled "The Man" that gingerly picks and chooses its facts and anecdotes. It is written from a fan's perspective, fed by an imagined intimacy. Reminded of the stark contrast between other Price books and her own effort,





PAGE 34 TOP: Vincent Price ignores the dangers of smoking in this sophisticated (if unhealthy) publicity pose. PAGE 34 BOTTOM: The <u>real</u> dangers of smoking are revealed in this marvelously gruesome pose from the 3-D horror classic HOUSE OF WAX (1953). ABOVE: Vincent and Victoria Price attend the opening of the Vincent Price Gallery at East Los Angeles College in 1992.

Victoria laughs when *Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography* is described, as it was before publication by gossip queen Liz Smith, as a "warts and all" expose:

"It's such a difficult thing, really, because biography in the late 20th century is <u>always</u> supposed to have that element. But that wasn't my relationship with my father. We were very close and I loved him very much, so I had no intention of doing a tell-all, in the sense of warts and all. The only way it could be considered that is because he was such a nice man and loved by everybody, and he was someone who was jealous of his own public reputation. So it's warts and all in that I go behind the mask of his public persona to show some of his fears and some of his transitional growth processes. In that sense, it's more warty than some previous viewpoints."

Victoria feels strongly that, to reveal the intimate details of a person's life, even unpleasant details, serves only to humanize the subject. "It shows that everybody is human. I don't think it's a question of good or bad or a judgement call; it's really just a question of a more nuanced portrait of someone. And that's all I wanted to do—not to paint a negative picture of my dad, but just to paint a more well-

rounded portrait."

The phrase "paint a well-rounded portrait" is a telling one, given Vincent Price's lifelong devotion to art, a passion shared by his daughter. In fact, *Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography* began not as a bio, but as an art book.

"My father and I began the process together in 1992. We worked pretty much nonstop for three long afternoons a week for almost a year—nine months to a year. Then I transcribed everything and went back to him with questions about the transcription. I actually was in New York, all set to talk to publishers about the art book, when my father started to die, and so I went straight back to LA. It wasn't till another six months had passed that I went back to New York and everyone was interested in a biography."

Victoria was reluctant at first to tackle such a daunting task, for two reasons. "First of all, I'm not entirely sure that children make the best biographers. Second, I'm not an expert on the horror genre. But then I realized that there probably are lots of books by experts on horror and there might not be anyone who knew quite as much as I did about the other aspects of his life. And so I started out; I kept talking myself into the process. Once I decided to do it, I realized that there was something that I could say that would help him to be remembered in the well-rounded way that I remember him. I decided it was a good idea."

As it transpired, the horror movie coverage, much of it gleaned from *The Complete Films*..., is by far the book's weakest element. Not only does Victoria lack an affinity for the subject, but her information is often faulty. We're told, for example, that Christopher Lee played Price's "hideously mutilated brother Edward" in THE OBLONG BOX (1969), when in fact Edward was played by Alister Wil-

"I read Lucy Chase Williams' book on my father as a resource for his horror films, and one thing that was problematic for me, as somebody who knew him, is that Lucy has the attitude toward my father that so many of his fans have, that he could do no wrong. I felt that he had more shades of gray to him than people who didn't really know him thought...."

liamson and Lee was Dr. Neuhart, one of Edward's victims. Price's role in THE TINGLER (1959) is described as that of "a mad scientist, literally out to scare his friends to death," when he literally is no such thing. And far too much attention is paid Hammer Films, for whom Price never made a single appearance. Nevertheless, the book makes up in other areas what it lacks in film scholarship, and Victoria's

primary research is exceptionally detailed.

"It took me a year of research after my father died, because he left a big cache of 900,000 items at the Library of Congress—that took two trips—and then there was another cache of items in Europe. Then I went to England to interview his friends and then interviewed more friends all over the States. I was very curious—knowing that he was, like Boris Karloff, somebody about whom nothing bad was said—I was curious to see whether anybody would say anything more revealing about him. But then no one did! Everything was incredibly positive. And certainly that's

how I feel about my father; I feel noth-

pieces of his personal puzzle, then paradoxically kept those pieces—in the form of letters and official documents—and more or less gave the game away. It shocked Victoria to lean of her liberal father's early anti-semitism as a young man touring Europe, his Nazi sympathies, and his shaky stance in the ugly face of McCarthyism. A letter written to his parents from Vienna in the early thirties reads in part: "These people are so poor . . . They are ruled by Jews who tax them to excess." In a later letter from Nuremberg, he writes of Adolph Hitler: "From the spirit here and faith in the man and the lack of faith in Austria, which is completely under the control of the Pop and Judea, I feel he must be right " Later, in the fifties, Price came under the scrutiny of Senator Joe McCarthy and the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Though he privately deplored those informers who supported HUAC—the list included John Wayne, Adolphe Menjou, Ginger Rogers, Robert Taylor, and Ronald Reagan-Price panicked when he learned that his name was on McCarthy's list of "premature anti-Nazi sympathizers." (Ironic, considering his former political views.) Though in life he never admitted to caving in under the pressure, Victoria later found a manila envelope

mented to Alec Guinness, 'Well, Dad always said that it

was he who talked you into doing STAR WARS,' and I

asked if this was true or was it a cock and bull story? And

Alec Guinness said he didn't remember that at all! So it was a cock and bull story! Now that's not necessarily negative,

but it's interesting to see how people construct their own

Vincent Price strove mightily to hide a number of the

"It was very hard for me to discover Dad's early antisemitism and reconcile that with the person I knew," Victoria says now. "I had an immediate desire to not write about it. Then I thought, well, it would be so much worse if he had grown up very liberal and become anti-semitic. So in a sense, it's a good morality tale of somebody who grows up, as we all do to a certain degree, believing what our parents tell us—and then having to really grow up. In his case, one might think it was a smidge late, but eventually he changed his mind and grew into the liberal man and the freethinking person that he became. But my first

among her father's papers. Inside was a five-page FBI document in which Price refuted all charges of communism and stated his "belief" that anyone who pleaded the

instinct was to say, 'God, I can't include that!'

"The business with McCarthy was another section of my father's life that really appalled me. I'm a big Lillian Hellman fan, and so, when I discovered that letter in his papers, I was very judgmental about him, particularly since I'd asked him over and over and over about that period. I went to high school with the daughter of one of McCarthy's two right-hand men—he became a movie producer, which I always thought was completely ironic—and so I was fascinated by that period from the time I was 15, just fascinated. I would always ask Dad what happened. He didn't tell me that much, so when I found out I was really shocked. I walked around feeling judgmental for a long time, really "







PAGE 36: Vincent Price and Anne Baxter share a foul yolk as Egghead and Olga on television's campy BATMAN series. LEFT: We shall not see their like again—Basil Rathbone, Vincent Price, Peter Lorre, and Boris Karloff enlivened the funeral-parlor farce THE COMEDY OF TERRORS in 1964. RIGHT: Diana Rigg and Price fry Vincent's futrure wife, Coral Browne, in this electrifying scene from THEATRE OF BLOOD (1973).

And then there's the subject of sex. A hint of lavender has colored Vincent Price's name for decades, with some fans eagerly speculating that the actor was either gay or bisexual and others angrily refusing to even consider the possibility. Those who object often do so on the grounds that they have no interest in the man's private life, but paradoxically never grouse when the subject of Price's three marriages, two children, and heterosexual affairs come up. Writer Boze Hadleigh's *Scarlet Street* interview with Anne Baxter, the Olga to Price's Egghead on the BATMAN TV series of the sixties, in which the actress discussed such gay (and possibly gay) costars as Tyrone Power, Clifton Webb, and, yes, Vincent Price, generated several complaints from Scarlet Readers—all directed solely at references to the horror star. That some of his fans could learn a lesson in tolerance from their hero is yet another of the many ironies in Price's life, for the man who took pride in playing Oscar Wilde on the stage was not at all skittish about the subjectat least as far as it concerned others.

"He was obviously somebody who was unjudgemental about other people's sexual preferences or sexual choices," remembers his lesbian daughter, "and also comfortable with his own sexuality—to the degree that he could be, as a man of his era. And so that in itself is saying something very positive. Again, it's something that creates a more well-rounded human being, sort of the bigger picture. He had so many gay friends, and was completely unjudgemental and very physical and tactile.

"A friend of my father's said he had proof that Dad was bisexual. He was an old, old friend, and his partner during the sixties was an actor who was one of my childhood heroes. So I trundled over to his house to hear the proof, and the proof was that they had been walking through the Metropolitan Museum one day in the fifties and my father had flirted with him. That was his conclusive proof! My God! And there were other stories—I'd follow these leads all the way to the end, and the end of the story would be that he'd been at a gay bar, or he kissed another man on the mouth. That's really when I decided that these stories actually painted an interesting picture, because whatever he was or wasn't, he was comfortable with homosexuality. And as Roddy McDowall put it, 'We'll never know how he thought of himself.'"

How he thought of himself, perhaps not. But as the late Roddy McDowall, discussing Price and his third wife,

Coral Browne, also put it: "Obviously, from dropped remarks by both Coral and Vincent, they both had bisexual experiences"

Which brings us to the subject of the Semi-Wicked Stepmother, the actress Coral Browne, who met Price on the set of THEATRE OF BLOOD (1973) and swiftly closed the curtain on his marriage to Mary Grant Price, Victoria's mother. (Before Mary, Price was wed to Edith Barrett, best known to horror fans for her role as the mother in the 1943 Val Lewton classic I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE.) According to Victoria, writing about her father's third wife proved a challenge:

'I've always said about Coral that, if she'd just been horrible to me, I could have hated her and in a sense that would have made my life easier. But she wasn't; she could be a really wonderful friend and then turn on you! She could understand me and my relationship with my father in a way that nobody could, and then she could become incredibly jealous. Really, I have to say that I always felt very grateful that I had her in my life, because how many times does one get the opportunity to be so honored by somebody as completely unique as Coral? She was really straight off the pages of a book and, being an avid reader, I knew those kind of characters don't come into one's life very often. I wanted to make sure that what I wrote about her didn't come across sounding bitter. Certainly, my life and my relationship with my father would have been quite different had she not been part of our lives, but I'm really glad that she was in the sense that she made him happy. She was really a character!"

Such a character that, as Victoria related in her *Advocate* piece, Browne flirted outrageously with her stepdaughter's lesbian friends! At the same time, she was extremely jealous of her husband's friendships with men. (In her book, Victoria writes, "My father often complained that none of his wives had ever allowed him to have close male friends. He claimed that they felt threatened by his strong emotional ties to certain men.") On the subject of her stepmother, Victoria concludes, "She was completely compelling and intriguing. One couldn't help but <u>be</u> compelled and intrigued by her. I was so lucky to have known her, although she made much of my teenage years miserable. Obviously, there was this paradox"

Trimson Mhronicles by Forrest J Ackerman

number of fans, flatteringly, A thought we were lookalikes. So sometimes when they couldn't afford the maestro, they got me for, well, half-Price.

I was with him at the Hollywood premiere of THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES. It was billed as his 101st performance and Mayor Bradley declared it Vincent Price Week.

Fifteen years after Boris Karloff died, Vincent flew over to Barcelona to meet up with me at a fantasy film festival. He told me that in the plane, during the night, a middle-aged lady came to him all excited and asked if she could have his autograph, telling him, "You can't imagine how many years I've enjoyed your pictures, Mr. Karloff!" So Vincent brought Boris back to life, with the only autograph by him 15 years after he died.

Being raced across the face of Spain in a small automobile to the town where Cervantes wrote Don Quixote, it's a crying shame there wasn't an audiocassette in the car, because for some inexplicable rea-



Vincent lights up as Forry looks on .

son Vincent and I started singing a duet of Al Jolson's "Sonny Boy!" In the little Cervantes town, I walked a few steps behind him and it was fascinating to see faces coming in our direction and sud-

denly have one person speak to another, unable to believe that it was Vincent Price walking down the sidewalk. One young girl finally got up her nerve and asked him, "Oh, could I kiss you, Mr. Price?" Vincent obliged her and to this day she probably tells her grandchildren of the greatest thrill of her life.

Last scene of all: knowing his days were numbered, Vincent obliged me by giving me his last autograph, identified as such on a card which I display in my living room, together with a photograph

of us together in my home.
God bless you, Vincent, and, in the company of Boris and Bela and the Peters Lorre and Cushing and Lon Sr. and Ir. and Elsa and Charles and all the other great Imagi-movie stars there on the astral plane, tell Prince Sirki not to be in too big a hurry to take Christopher Lee and Ray Bradbury and Brother Theodore and other of our treasured personalities fantastic to join you.

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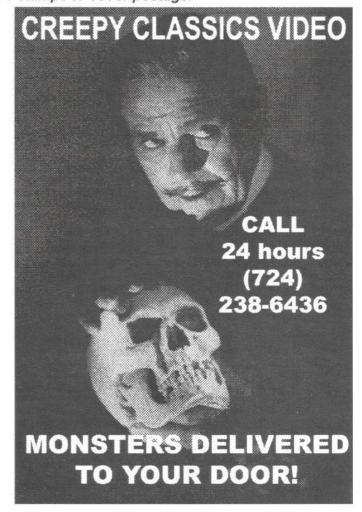
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MYSTERY OF THE WAXIMSEUM

Mhich is the true horror classic—MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM or HOUSE OF WAX? Scarlet Street waxes enthusiastic about this burning issue...

by Ken Hanke



Ivan Igor (Lionel Atwill) shows off his masterpiece, a wax statue of Marie Antoinette (Fay Wray holding very still), to Doctor Rasmussen (Holmes Herbert) and Mr. Galatalin (Claude King) in MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM (1933).

or years, Michael Curtiz's MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM (1933) was considered to be a lost film—only to turn up in the late sixties in Jack Warner's personal library of films. (So much for studio bosses having any idea about their holdings.) Of course, the problem with all such pieces of lost and found cinema is that it is quite possible that the memories of those who saw the film in the dear dim past are apt to be a soupcon on the roseate-tinged side. Truth to tell, it's very rare that the legendary lost film that crops up lives up to its reputation. Certainly, THE OLD DARK HOUSE (1932) did, and THE GHOUL (1933) actually turned out to be better than expected (at least by those who recalled Karloff's hope that it remain lost), but what of MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM? When the film first generally appeared in the early seventies, there was a great rush to proclaim it a disappointment. Some of this, no doubt, was due to the rather poor color transfers that were made at the time (since markedly improved in the film's video and laser releases), but in the main, Curtiz's film was found to be wanting in a number of departments. Some, such as my esteemed colleague Mr. Valley, were-even are—of the opinion that Andre de Toth's 1953 remake, HOUSE OF WAX, was actually better than the original, a singularly bold statement that seems, to me at least, lamentably, egregiously, even shockingly off-base, wrongheaded, and even downright screwy

MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM was made at the peak of the first wave of horror films during the early years of sound. It was part of Warner Bros. bid—along with its companion piece, DOCTOR X (1932)—to cash in on the success enjoyed by Universal with their thrillers. (The script even gives a nod to its Universal counterparts when Glenda Farrell describes the lurking horror of the film by saying "he made Frankenstein look like a lily.") But Warners opted

to go Universal one better on both occasions. Their bids in the horror-film sweepstakes would be in Technicolor, though as William K. Everson suggests in his Classics of the Horror Film (1974), this probably was a decision based on the need to use up commitments to the Technicolor company. (The fact that DOCTOR X was actually shot twiceonce in color by Ray Rennahan and again in black and white by Richard Towers-suggests as much, just as it suggests that Warners never intended on going to the expense of releasing it on any wide scale in color.) Like many studios at the dawn of sound, Warner Bros. opted for contracts with Technicolor because it seemed a suitable embellishment for the musicals they were cranking out, generally with more enthusiasm than taste and talent. By 1931, the public was so tired of musicals that theatres were advertising films with placards proclaiming "This is not a musical." Warners, in fact, brought the Cole Porter hit FIFTY MIL-LION FRENCHMEN (1931) to the screen in Technicolor, complete with stage luminaries William Gaxton, Olsen and Johnson, and Helen Broderick, but with all the Porter tunes entirely relegated to background music.

If musicals were temporarily out of fashion, then horror films, which were viewed as something of a gimmick, anyway, may have seemed the obvious next choice for honoring the Technicolor contract. Whatever the case, color—especially the limited palette of two-strip Technicolor, with its slightly unreal hand-tinted photo look—proved exceptionally effective in the hands of Michael Curtiz, who, along with color pioneer Rennahan, used the medium to both accent reality where it suited (the museum fire, the vats of bubbling wax) and to warp reality when that was more desirable (the Expressionist shadows, the use of abnormal colors in Igor's "lab" combined with highly theatrical uses of light). Interestingly, the Technicolor factor of





LEFT: As Ivan Igor, Lionel Atwill had one of his greatest horror roles (and one of the rarest in that he got to play a "monster" under gobs of makeup) in MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM. RIGHT: Joe Worth (Edwin Maxwell) seeks to end his partnership with Igor by burning the wax museum to the ground.

MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM makes it a kind of stunt picture and so a spiritual, as well as literal, predecessor to HOUSE OF WAX and its 3-D gimmick. The difference is that, while Andre de Toth used 3-D with surprising skill, it is almost always an obvious gimmick, with scenes that exist for no other reason than to show off the medium. Curtiz was able to make Technicolor an integral part of his film and work for him, but de Toth seems to be imprisoned by his one-note gimmick. The difference is that Curtiz made a great horror picture and de Toth made a fun one, which is certainly no crime in itself, but does put the remake into a

different, and lesser, category

Perhaps the most notable thing about MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM is the fact that the 1933 film actually seems more modern than its 1953 counterpart. To some extent, this is the result of the remake being a period piece, where the original has a period (1921) prologue with the bulk of the film taking place in 1933—but it's also a question of acting styles. While Lionel Atwill plays Ivan Igor with more than a little theatrical aplomb and the always wonderful Arthur Edmund Carewe plays his assistant, Professor D'Arcy, with all the delightful melodrama at his disposal (casting Carewe as a junkie going through withdrawal was simply begging for bravura theatrics, and Curtiz got his money's worth), the bulk of the cast play their roles with the sort of still-fresh realism that marked the Warner Bros. films of the time. In fact, the realistic performances of Glenda Farrell, Fay Wray, Frank McHugh, Edwin Maxwell, Gavin Gordon, DeWitt Jennings, and Thomas Jackson accentuate the extrovert villainy of Messrs. Atwill and Carewe and afford a nice contrast to the film's creepier scenes. (MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM also benefits greatly by having been made in the pre-Code years, allowing for numerous explicit drug references, a remark about nonmatrimonial cohabitation, and other things that the movies pretended didn't happen 20 years later.) Moreover, the modern-day scenes make those in the wax museum, the morgue, and Igor's laboratory just that much more effective. There is no such contrast in HOUSE OF WAX. Similarly, WAX MUSEUM is altogether more plausible (to the degree that word can be used to describe a storyline involving wax-coated corpses being displayed as museum figures) by giving the prologue a space of 12 years from the central story. It's rather hard to believe that, in a matter of a few months, anyone who looks like Professor Jarrod (Vincent Price) in the remake recovered to the state of agility he constantly demonstrates in pursuit of the leading lady!

One surprise on seeing the films side by side is just how much Crane Wilbur's HOUSE screenplay takes almost directly from the earlier version by Don Mullaly and Carl Erickson. (Both films claim adaptation from Charles Belden's original, though WAX MUSEUM refers to it as a play, and HOUSE OF WAX calls it a story.) Much of the dialogue, in fact, emerges intact in the remake-or so little altered that it makes no difference. (The original even contains the kernel of the idea for the paddle-ball barker in a passing remark about calling in "that fellow out front" and closing the museum for the night.) Structurally, the two films are almost identical. They both begin with a villainous partner setting fire to the sculptor's wax museum for the insurance money and leaving the artist to die in the conflagration, then move on to the subsequently disfigured and unhinged victim "recreating" his lost masterpieces by dipping dead folks in wax like so many butterscotch-covered ice cream cones. (The screwiness of this idea is soundly skewered in the original film when a somewhat less fanciful theory is put forth by newspaperwoman Florence Dempsey to her editor, who comments, "Work that up into a comic strip

and we'll syndicate it.")

Perhaps the most notable alteration, apart from the period setting and a plethora of largely arbitrary name changes, is the later film's decision to drop MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM's mystery angle. Today, when nearly everyone knows what the mystery is, it's not easy to appreciate the fact that the film is indeed structured as a mystery-sometimes to the point of confusion. (It is unlikely that anyone seeing the film once is entirely clear as to what some of the action involving Worth in his post-museum-burning career of bootlegging and narcotics is all about.) The important thing about the mystery element that HOUSE OF WAX forgets is that, without it, there is no real surprise when the heroine beats against the overzealous sculptor's face and it cracks open to reveal the monstrous visage beneath, since there is no question but that Professor Jarrod and the indescribable monster (which is seen much more clearly and frequently in the less subtle remake) are one in the same. The shock, of course, has by now been dissipated due to familiarity with the remake, not to mention the countless references to the scene even when MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM was considered lost. But if the film is viewed by an audience unfamiliar with the story (one such crowd was recently discovered in the isolated wilds of Bora Bora, I believe), the mystery and the shock work even today.





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LEFT: Professor Darcy (Arthur Edmund Carewe) and Ivan Igor (Lionel Atwill) meet Florence Dempsey (Glenda Farrell), Charlotte Duncan (Fay Wray), and Ralph Burton (Allen Vincent). RIGHT: Atwill and Wray were teamed under friendlier circumstances (as father and daughter) in DOCTOR X (1933).

Another quality shared by both versions is the degree of humor injected into the proceedings, and yet here is another area where it is the older film that seems far more modern. The comedic aspects of MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM are primarily given over to Glenda Farrell as wisecracking reporter Florence Dempsey, with or without Frank McHugh as long-suffering editor Jim-and her brassy, woman-of-the-world characterization is still fresh and funny. ("Oh, what wouldn't I give for a slug of gin," she says while waiting for the police to open a crate that may contain a corpse.) Florence Dempsey is sharp in a way that standard horror film heroines were not supposed to be at the time, and, despite the presence of nominal leading lady Fay Wray as Charlotte Duncan, it's really Farrell's picture all the way. Wray has much less footage, much less characterization, and isn't called on to do much more than look fetching and suffer the artistic attentions of Igor, since she has the misfortune of being the image of his long destroyed Marie Antoinette figure. (Of course, she's also required to cut loose with a number of those screams for which she is so rightly famous.) Farrell, in fact, is used to undermine the sappiness of the romantic subplot between Wray and Allen Vincent, who plays hero Ralph Burton. ("Gee, that's a pretty dress. Have I seen it before?" asks Ralph upon seeing Charlotte at the museum. "Yes, I think so," responds Charlotte. "Thank goodness, that's settled," Florence comments.)

The humor in HOUSE OF WAX is anything but fresh or funny. Being a period film, Crane Wilbur opted to adopt an air of condescension about the characters' antiquity, creating supposedly quaint moments that are more painful than funny—ranging from giving Carolyn Jones' character a grating laugh, to a thrill-seeking girl who keeps passing out at the wax museum's horrors, to Phyllis Kirk's supposed shock at seeing the can-can. (Frankly, Kirk exudes far too much intelligence for most of the similar ingenue material with which she gamely copes.) There is an irony here in that the newer film exudes an air of superiority to the past, yet is much more constrained by censorship than a film from the past! Similarly, the entire sequence involving the paddle-ball barker suffers a bad case of the cutes. Moreover, it takes the viewer completely out of the film by having the fellow actually address the cinema audience-a gimmick requiring a more style-driven filmmaker than de Toth.

Another scripting peculiarity of HOUSE OF WAX is the change-of-heart that Jarrod undergoes on emerging from the fire. As in MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM, it is his

refusal to pander to the public taste for horrific displays of crime, torture, and murder that prompts his financial partner to burn down the original wax museum. In the original, Igor remains obsessed with the ideal of beauty (despite the somewhat drastic lengths he has to go to to "create" it), but in HOUSE Jarrod opts to give the public the kind of sensationalistic work they want. "Oh, there'll be beauty, too, for contrast if nothing else," he says. The problem with this is that it doesn't exactly mesh with his pursuit of beauty. In MYSTERY, Igor is driven by his quest to recreate "all those beautiful things that were destroyed" and to exact his revenge on the man who destroyed them (and very nearly him) in the first place. In HOUSE, Jarrod seems less driven by the artistic ideal with this twist, and since he offs his arsonistically-inclined partner almost at once, the motivating factor behind his actions becomes quite vague. And it is just this sort of thinking that makes the two markedly similar films so very different. MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM, for all its comedy, is quite serious about itself. It is a film of some conviction. HOUSE OF WAX, for all its horrors, very rarely takes itself seriously. It is a film of fun, but no real conviction.

The difference in attitude is nowhere more evident than in the films' almost identically structured climaxes. The most curious thing about all this is that MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM is actually the more fanciful of the two in these scenes, yet it manages to be more convincing. The Curtiz film includes such improbable moments as a hooded "wax" figure with eyes that inexplicably follow Charlotte through the museum, not to mention doors that close as if by magic, driving her ever further into Igor's lair, ultimately trapping her there. Nothing so outrageously obvious happens in HOUSE OF WAX, yet the loss only makes the film more tepid, not more believable. Again, Atwill's dialogue-indeed, his whole encounter with Fay Wray-is more elaborate and floridly theatrical than in the remake. When she offers to help him get out of his wheelchair and he stands on his own, saying, "Help me, my dear? You'll help me to give back to the world my masterpiece! My Marie Antoinette!" it is a moment of pure bravura acting that succeeds on a combination of sheer conviction and satisfying our expectations (something as essential to horror films as surprise). The same moment in HOUSE OF WAX is tamer by far, but seems like the most outrageous melodrama contrasted with the subsequent scene in which Jarrod's alcoholic assistant (Ned Young) breaks down under police interrogation and the need for a drink. It may be re-





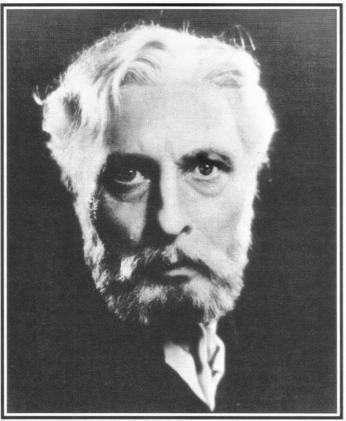
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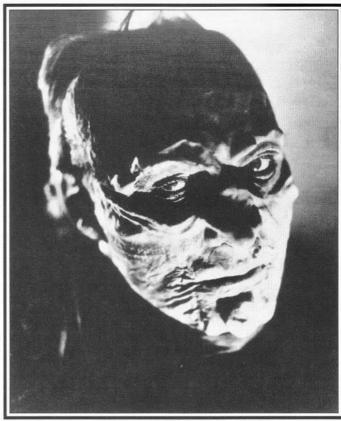
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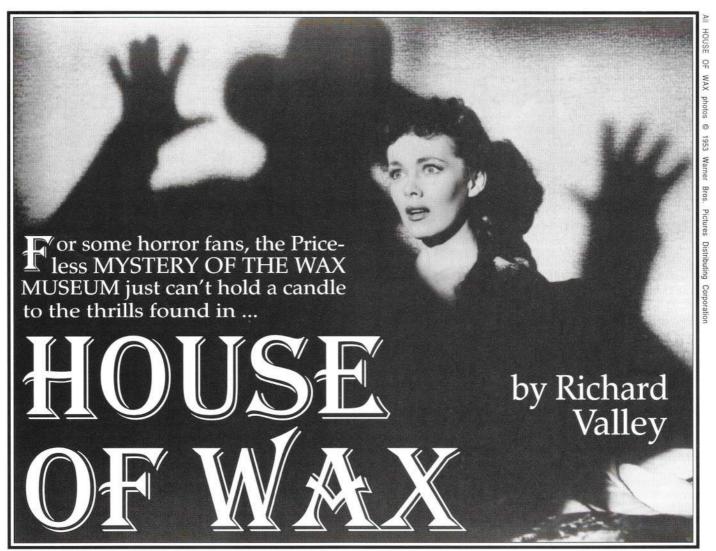


alistic, but it is also instantly forgettable, whereas Arthur Edmund Carewe's drug-addicted D'Arcy gives an indelible reading of the same basic lines. ("All right! I'll talk! I'll tell you all I know. Ramsey was murdered because he looked like Voltaire. Do you hear? Because he looked like Voltaire! Do you want to know what became of him? He's a statue a silly wax statue!") Accused of killing him, D'Arcy only becomes that much more agitated. "No, no! No, no, I did not. It was Igor at the wax museum!" "You were in on it. You worked for him," insists his tormentor. "No! The only thing I did for him was to keep track of the man named Worth!" argues, D'Arcy, only to receive a very pre-Code constabulary slap in the face and an accusation of lying. "No, it was Igor at the wax museum! You'll find your judge embalmed in wax! He's a statue of Voltaire together with the other corpses. I tell you the whole place is a morgue-do you hear? A morgue! A morgue!" Yes, it is theatrical—and very over-the-top theatrical, too-but it's also powerful and unforgettable.

The final confrontation between Igor and Charlotte is in the same key. Strangely, while HOUŠE OF WAX actually includes dialogue to indicate that the experience of the fire has driven Jarrod insane, it is MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM that paints a towering portrait of madness. Atwill's Igor is clearly beyond any contact with reality as he argues his case. "My child, why are you so pitifully afraid? Immortality has been the dream, the inspiration of mankind through the ages-and I am going to give you immortality!" He seems genuinely puzzled when Charlotte objects to the sort of immortality he has in mind, pointing out that she's done nothing to hurt him. "I have no desire to hurt you. You will always be beautiful. Think, my child, in a thousand years, you'll be as lovely as you are now! Come!" he urges. This, of course, is the big moment. She struggles against Igor and breaks open his wax face, revealing the gnarled horror beneath. "Your face! It was wax!" she realizes, tactlessly adding, "You fiend!" Again, Igor is stunned, and begs, "My Marie Antoinette, you must not say that to me!" So, of course, she repeats it. "No, there was a fiend—of that you may be sure—there was a fiend,

and this is what he did to me!" he explains, rushing over and addressing a coffinlike packing case. ""You! You did this! For 12 years—12 awful years—this terrible living dead man with his burnt face and hands has searched for the fiend! Now the account is closed! He is here!" exalts Igor as the packing case opens and a waxen Joe Worth, all but his head swathed like a would-be mummy, comes crashing face-first onto the floor. It's a splendidly grisly moment that the remake cheated itself out of (using the business early on for campy comic effect) by restructuring the revenge part of the storyline.

None too surprisingly, this is all a bit much for Charlotte, who obligingly swoons when her boyfriend loses a bout of fisticuffs with her addled admirer and takes his place on the floor (to be enshrined among other notable unconscious heroes of the thirties), leaving Igor to ready her for immortality. Preparing Charlotte for her wax bath, he still assures her (in an obviously overdubbed line that must have been inserted to make sure the audience knew what was going on) of the bright side of the idea. "Don't be afraid, my dear. In a few minutes, the container will have filled with wax—and when it overflows, your beauty will be preserved forever." HOUSE OF WAX eschews most such thrills (instead offering a prolonged fight scene, dictated by 3-D, between Paul Picerni and Charles Bronson) and offers Price's Jarrod a more tongue-in-cheek approach when he traps his quarry. "It's an interesting process. If you have patience with me, my dear, I'll show you how it was done." (Amusingly, this is very close to the line Lionel Atwill uses on Anne Nagel in 1941's MAN MADE MONSTER.) It just doesn't have the same impact (much as HOUSE OF WAX's jokey tag scene doesn't have the freshness and surprise of that of MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM) and is another instance of how the remake obviously takes itself more as an amusement than a flat-out thriller. Indeed, Price's role is written in a somewhat jovial, albeit Satanical, tone, relying much more on the actor's considerable personality than on his actual acting ability. At will and his writers and director



Those who live for the day when the lost Lon Chaney picture LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT (1927) at last is found, take warning! Though, for the sake of history, it is never preferable that a lost film remain missing, it is often damaging to the vanished celluloid's reputation when it

finally turns up.

Consider the case of MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM (1933), for decades a "lost treasure" till a copy was discovered among the possessions of Warner Bros. chief Jack Warner. Is MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM a dud? No, not a bit—it's quite an enjoyable film, its early use of two-strip Technicolor a fascinating novelty, and its vintage cast for the most part a delight. But—is MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM a classic, fully deserving of the rose-colored acclaim it garnered while remaining discreetly off-stage? Well, no, not really. And more to the point—at least for the purposes of this paraffin-based issue of *Scarlet Street*—is it really superior to the 1953 remake HOUSE OF WAX, which, during the period of MYSTERY's truancy, was invariably described as a weak sister to the original?

The answer is no.

HOUSE OF WAX is often drubbed for being a 3-D gimmick movie, while MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM is praised because it got there first and gives off the nostalgic glow that hides the flaws in many of Hollywood's early talkies. But gimmickry is not necessarily evidence of a lack of quality, nor antiquity a sign of excellence.

In 1956's INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, Carolyn Jones, as Santa Rosa housewife Teddy Belicec, is scared witless when a lifeless body gradually transforms itself into an exact duplicate of her husband, Jack (played

by King Donovan). Before the process is completed, however, the body is a blank, waiting for a personality to be added. ("It's like the first impression that's stamped on a coin," Jack remarks. "It isn't finished.") That very much is the case with MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM. All the elements are there, but they haven't developed fully; they lack, to a large degree, personality. If MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM is a clever and promising outline, then HOUSE OF WAX is the final draft, its characters and situations fully matured and every possibility realized.

Consider MYSTERY's first scene. It is 1921. We discover Joe Worth (Edwin Maxwell), the scoundrelly business partner of genius sculptor Ivan Igor (Lionel Atwill), loitering outside the wax museum in the pouring rain. Two distinguished gentlemen arrive to visit Igor, but, since there is no indication that Worth expects and/or wishes to avoid them, we never learn why he prefers standing outdoors in a downpour to sitting in a warm, dry interior. (He's clearly there to generate suspense, but there's no logic to his behavior.) Inside, Igor shows his guests, Dr. Rasmussen and Mr. Galatalin (Holmes Herbert and Claude King), his beloved wax sculptures, including figures of Joan of Arc and Marie Antoinette, the latter his masterpiece. (Joan and Marie are none too steadily impersonated by Monica Bannister and Fay Wray.) The visitors voice their approval, make vague remarks about a possible award for Igor's work, and depart, never to be seen again. At this point, a sufficiently soaked Worth enters the museum. He complains to Igor that their business is losing money. Igor makes vague remarks about a possible award for his work. Worth declares that there is money to be had in burning the museum





LEFT: Betrayed by his business partner, Professor Henry Jarrod (Vincent Price) is left to perish in the flaming HOUSE OF WAX (1953). RIGHT: Sue Allen (Phyllis Kirk) helps neighbor Cathy Gray (Carolyn Jones) prepare for a night on the town with a wealthy gentleman friend.

to the ground, and sets about doing so. The wax figures go up in flames (Bannister and Wray are replaced by mannequins only remotely resembling the actresses), Worth and Igor struggle, Worth escapes, Igor stands around watching everything melt, a burning rope snaps, and a guillotine blade falls, beheading a dummy. End of scene.

Consider the same scene in HOUSE OF WAX. It is 1900. It's another dark and stormy night, but here Matthew Burke (Roy Roberts), the scoundrelly business partner of genius sculptor Professor Henry Jarrod (Vincent Price), knows enough to come in out of the rain. Once inside, he complains to Jarrod that their business is losing money. Jarrod tells his partner about two expected guests, one of whom might buy Burke out. There's a knock on the door. Burke takes refuge in the upstairs office, warning the sculptor on the way to put a stiff price on his work, and Jarrod opens the door to his friend, Bruce Allison (Philip Tonge), and wealthy art critic Sidney Wallace (Paul Cavanagh).

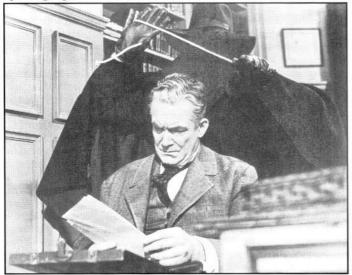
Already, in the first few minutes of HOUSE OF WAX, we have a more compelling and suspenseful plot. Instead of a soggy, shadowy figure and a dull guided tour, we have a situation in which we know that the museum's future is at stake, the owners are at loggerheads, and a guest may

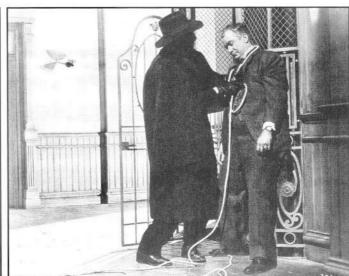
hold the monetary key to salvation. The dialogue is also better crafted and delivered (in MYSTERY, Atwill saddles himself with an unlikely French accent, an unhappy amalgam of Maurice Chevalier and Jacques Clouseau), and even the choice of wax statues is a marked improvement. (John Wilkes Booth—a man accustomed to hiding behind a false persona, one of the film's themes—substitutes for Voltaire.)

Before leaving, Wallace promises to consider the business venture in three months time. Having already met Burke, we know this won't be good enough, and before long the museum is in flames and the partners are duking it out. Again, the suspense is heightened and the stakes raised: Burke knocks Jarrod cold and, while the sculptor is momentarily oblivious, turns on all the gas jets. Jarrod awakens, the brawl continues, and Burke skedaddles. Jarrod, unaware that the entire structure may blow at any moment, seeks to save his creations, then flees into a back room as the balcony comes crashing down. Cut to outside and the wax museum explodes—a far more gripping climax than the loss of one wax head to a guillotine blade.

Following its opening sequence, MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM flashes forward 12 years (to 1933) and proceeds to wander in several directions at once, never stay-

LEFT: Matthew Burke (Roy Roberts) counts his ill-gotten gains from the wax museum fire, little suspecting that he'll never get a chance to spend any of it. RIGHT: After strangling Burke, Professor Jarrod makes it look like suicide by hanging him in an elevator.





ing with anyone long enough to establish audience identification. Even worse, the connections between the characters remain tenuous and unexplored. (One vitally important person—Joan Gale, whose body is stolen and "reinvented" as Joan of Arc—is dead before we even meet her!) On the other hand, HOUSE OF WAX picks up its narrative only months after the fire, and presents its cast almost in the fashion of a ghoulish LA RONDE—as links in a chain that eventually comes full circle. Professor Jarrod, the first character we meet, introduces us to Matthew Burke; Burke, following Jarrod's presumed death, introduces us to girlfriend Cathy Gray (Carolyn Jones); Cathy, following Burke's death, introduces us to boardinghouse neighbor Sue Allen (Phyllis Kirk); Sue, following Cathy's death, introduces us to sculptor Scott Andrews (Paul Picerni); Scott introduces Sue to Professor Jarrod

Carolyn Jones has only two scenes as Cathy Gray—the first in a beer garden with Matthew Burke in which she successfully holds out for marriage over a quick weekend

in Atlantic City, the second in the boarding house with Sue Allen, where she advises her less experienced friend about men and insists she take some money to get something to eat. ("I don't need any mad money. I never get mad.") At first glance, Cathy is simply a dumb blonde, but Jones, with the help of scripter Crane Wilbur, makes something special of the character. In the beer garden, Cathy's expressions are wideeyed and her voice high-pitched in the manner of Jean Hagen's Lina Lamont in 1952's SINGIN' IN THE RAIN. (Jones had used a similar voice in a brief bit at the beginning of ROAD TO BALI, made the same year as the MGM musical.) She impresses us by being able to outsmart the unscrupulous Burke, but she's still standard issue blonde. Her second scene, however, offers a fresh perspective. Strikingly, Cathy's voice is lower and better modulated; we realize that her previous tone is one reserved for gentlemen who prefer avaricious, but she's no dummy Burke himself!

(not yet); she's a woman who knows how to take care of herself within the limits imposed by early 20th-century society. With the lower vocal inflection comes an appealing warmth of character, evidenced by Cathy's affection and concern for Sue. By the time Cathy departs for a date with her new male friend (Burke, strangled by the post-toasted Jarrod, has "committed suicide" at this point), the audience knows her, likes her, and is ready to root for her in her pursuit of marriage and money.

All the more shocking, then, that the next time we see her she is lying in her bed—a lifeless corpse!

None of this would matter a bit if HOUSE OF WAX treated its casualties in the cavalier manner of most fright films (including MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM), with a brief period of mourning and a hasty return to the bloody business at hand. But in HOUSE OF WAX we are never allowed to forget the nutty professor's reluctant martyrs to art. They are always right there, on display in the new wax museum. (The prof, having survived the fire crippled and scarred, has, with the aid of two assistants, set about replacing his ruined "children" with corpses dipped in wax.) Matthew Burke, displayed as a figure of himself, swings to

and fro in a false elevator shaft, and Cathy Gray, sporting a black wig, becomes a genuine martyr—Joan of Arc. (Though it's most likely a coincidence, the wig makes Cathy look strikingly like another movie victim of persecution: Jean Brooks as the doomed Jacqueline Gibson in 1943's THE SEVENTH VICTIM.)

This brings us to Sue Allen, the true heart of HOUSE OF WAX and yet another instance of the 1953 production's improvements over its ancestor. MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM offers two heroines: the brassy reporter Florence Dempsey (Glenda Farrell) and the demure Charlotte Duncan (Fay Wray). Flo is the typical wisecracking newshound of Broadway's THE FRONT PAGE and its countless variations; Charlotte screams. Flo uncovers the grisly secret of the wax museum; Charlotte almost becomes one of its exhibits. Glenda Farrell is good fun as Flo, but her rapid-fire repartee fails to hide the fact that nothing she says is really very funny. (Her sparring partner, Frank McHugh as editor Jim—just plain Jim—is a distant cousin indeed to Cary

Grant's Walter Burns in HIS GIRL FRIDAY, the 1940 version of THE FRONT PAGE.) As Charlotte, Fay Wray is given precious little to do. Second billed, she doesn't even appear—except as a mannequin—until the film is almost half over!

Sue Allen is an altogether different breed of damsel in distress. She first appears as a struggling, out-of-work young woman who has obviously suffered some very hard knocks-and then things get worse. It is Sue who finds Cathy's body and makes the even more shocking discovery that the killer is still in the room. (The resultant chase through the foggy, gaslit streets of New York is not only a highlight of HOUSE OF WAX, but of horror films overall.) Since Jarrod has survived the fire more monster than man, Sue's evewitness account is viewed with doubt by boyfriend Scott Andrews and police officials Tom Brennan (Frank Lovejoy) and Jim Shane (Dabbs Greer). She's considered something of a crackpot by the law, and even Scott seems to harworse, Sue becomes obsessed by

the statue of Joan of Arc in the wax museum where, thanks to patron Sidney Wallace, Scott has found work. (Unlike his forgettable counterpart in MYSTERY, Wallace doesn't vanish after his first scene; he plays a vital role in that he helps finance the new museum and introduces Scott—and Sue—to the masked, seemingly wheelchair-bound Jarrod.)

Sue may give the appearance of being crushed by life's little vicissitudes, but she's no fool. She's struck by the resemblance of Jarrod's Joan to Cathy Gray, and, when everyone else murmurs "coincidence," she sets about (like MYSTERY's Flo Dempsey) proving the suspicion that she can scarcely voice—that the statue and Cathy are one and the same. Her entry into the world of wax, though, is a hazardous one, because Sue (like MYSTERY's Charlotte Duncan) happens to be a dead ringer for the late, lamented statue of Marie Antoinette.

Combining Flo and Charlotte into the singular Sue Allen proves an inspiration that pays unexpected dividends. Not only does it solve the problem of the underdeveloped Charlotte, but it provides Sue with a humanity wholly lacking in both of MYSTERY's female leads. In the thirties version, with the exception of a minor character



their blondes pretty but hollowThe wax figure of Matthew Burke on display in law, and even Scott seems to harheaded. Granted, Cathy is still Professor Henry Jarrod's new museum is actually bor some doubts. To make matters avarigious, but she's no dummy Burke himself!





LEFT: Sue Allen is paid a nighttime visit by Professor Jarrod, who covets her as a replacement for his melted Marie Antoinette. RIGHT: Sue wanders through the HOUSE OF WAX in search of her boyfriend, blissfully unaware that a terrifying future awaits her—as a candle! PAGE 49: Jarrod prepares to cover Sue in a coat of boiling wax.

played by Gavin Gordon, nobody living knows anyone dead. In the remake, however, the fact that Sue knew and liked Cathy Gray makes the latter's presence in the museum sadly poignant instead of simply pragmatic. Sue's quest isn't merely a reporter's desire for headlines; it becomes a sensitive woman's need to find the truth behind the cruel death of a friend, and it lends a grim, melancholy air to each scene in which Sue pays a call on the House of Wax.

Much has been made of the contrast in MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM between the (then) modern hustle and bustle of Manhattan and the shadowy terrors lurking behind Ivan Igor's doors. Unfortunately for those making such claims, there are no shadowy terrors. From its glass and chrome portals to its widely spaced and brightly lit displays, Igor's wax museum resembles nothing so much as Macy's Department Store on an off day. When, toward the closing moments of the film, Charlotte Duncan wanders its aisles, one almost expects her to pick up a few bargains before heading for the cashier. The problem is compounded by the fact that the exhibits in Igor's new museum are every inch as dull as those in his old one. Voltaire! The man simply never learns.

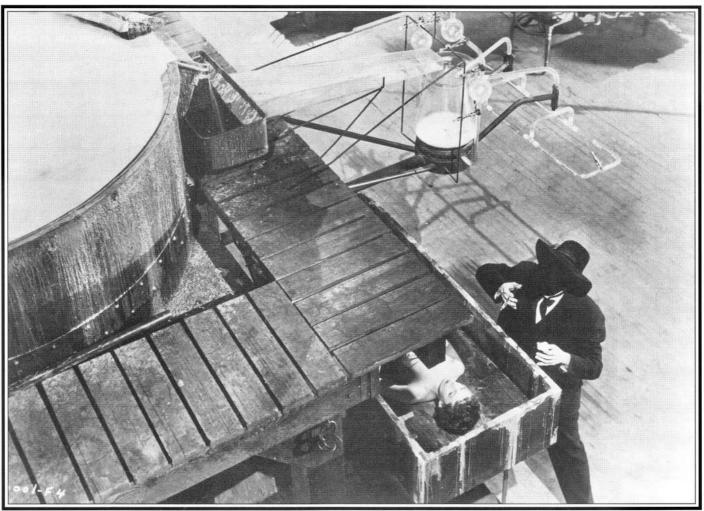
HOUSE OF WAX offers a thoroughly different House of Wax. Resurrected like a crazed phoenix from the flames of his first venture, Professor Jarrod opts to give the public the horrors he's experienced first hand—crimes and killings torn from the headlines of the day and reproduced in paraffin. The reward for this approach is twofold: we are immersed in an atmosphere of classic horror (which any fright fan worth his salt prefers to Macy's) and given insight into the tortured soul lurking beneath the waxen facade of Henry Jarrod. We're also given a lesson in practicality: since the prof now requires a steady supply of bodies to people his House, he is guaranteed them by taking his subjects directly from the daily news.

The concept of today's news becoming tomorrow's exhibit is cleverly utilized by making Matthew Burke the first victim. It gets Burke conveniently out of the way—his counterpart in MYSTERY, Worth, is featured in one bland and incomprehensible scene after another—and provides Jarrod with the insurance money from the fire, which he uses to launch his second museum. It also serves to give the police a trifle more to investigate when they reluctantly heed Sue Allen's suspicions and drop by the museum for a semiofficial visit.

As Lt. Tom Brennan and Sgt. Jim Shane, Frank Lovejoy and Dabbs Greer behave like a pair of turn of the century DRAGNET characters, adding a welcome dollop of deadpan humor to the HOUSE OF WAX mix. (As Dabbs Greer recalled in *Scarlet Street* #17, "Both Frank and I had a tendency to play scenes low-key, and after all, with all the fireworks popping around you, and you playing straight to it, you're better off trying to keep any emotional commitment out of it.") The bluecoats on duty in MYSTERY, on the other hand, are all eminently forgettable. As a result, the scene in which they grill Igor's drug-addled confederate, Professor D'Arcy (Arthur Edmund Carewe), comes up, for all its histrionics, dramatically short. When Brennan and Shane confront Jarrod's alcoholic henchman, Leon Averell (Ned Young), however, we know all three participants and are more immediately involved in the conflict.

HOUSE OF WAX marked the turning point in the career of Vincent Price, setting him resolutely on the road to horror stardom. (He had already paid occasional visits to the genre, most notably in 1940's THE INVISIBLE MAN RE-TURNS.) His Professor Henry Jarrod remains for many Price's stellar horror characterization; certainly, both the character and the film in which he runs riot are superior to the actor's other efforts in the fifties (though his Frederick Loren in 1958's HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL runs a close second). Price plays the flamboyant Jarrod with considerable aplomb, but, unlike such later characterizations as Nicholas Medina in PIT AND THE PENDULUM (1961), he does so without tongue so firmly pressed to cheek that it could pass for a mouthful of melon balls. (Speaking of facial features, Price, in keeping with the fact that Jarrod's face is a mask, keeps his fairly rigid, doing much of his emoting with his extraordinarily expressive voice.) The HOUSE script affords Price several opportunities for bravura acting, which he seizes without once overplaying his hand, but it also gives him a strange, touching moment midway through the story. Jarrod has met Sue Allen and recognized her as the living embodiment of his lost Marie Antoinette. Later that night, his scarred face undisguised, he steals into her room as she sleeps—possibly to strangle her as he did Cathy Gray, though his motives remain ambivalent. Sue wakes and screams, but instead of silencing her or beating a hasty retreat, Jarrod (in closeup) remains staring at her, his head tilting to the side, an expression of sadness and loss in his eyes. Then he turns and leaves.

Ivan Igor is arguably Lionel Atwill's most famous villain, but the characterization isn't nearly as successful as his Eric Gorman in MURDERS IN HIS ZOO (1933), his Dr. Rigas in MAN MADE MONSTER (1941), his Professor Moriarty in SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE SECRET WEAP-ON (1942), or even his Graham in THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET (1942). What Atwill brought to his best performances was a sardonic bonhomie, a joy in his own



villainy that is completely absent in Igor. Before his disfigurement, Ivan Igor is a reasonably affable sculptor with an improbable accent; afterwards he's a grump. He ridicules and abuses his subordinates, he whines over the lack of business in his new museum (though it's entirely his fault), and he goes about his bodysnatching with what sounds like the worst case of asthma in cinema history.

Price's Professor Jarrod is a much more multifaceted fiend. He's warm and friendly at the onset, even to the blustery Matthew Burke, and after the brawl he's still capable of kindness and good humor—though, needless to say, not to Burke. The script also gives art enthusiast Price the chance to take eager patrons on a tour through the House of Wax, which he does with an ever so slightly raised eyebrow and a superbly delivered string of dry, mordant witticisms—the sort Atwill would have reveled in, had he been given any. Make no mistake: HOUSE OF WAX isn't a plodding character study, it's a full steam ahead horror movie, with thrills and chills galore. Nevertheless, it manages along the way to ring some changes on the stereotypes that come with the territory, and it's a far better film for doing so.

Both MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM and HOUSE OF WAX end with the heroine cracking open the villain's waxy yellow buildup and the villain attempting to turn the heroine into a wickless candle. Both do it well, but HOUSE does it better. (Actually, Fay Wray was dissatisfied with her version, complaining in *Scarlet Street* #27 that "I was supposed to hit him and the covering of the mask was supposed to fall away—but it only fell partly away, not all

away. And what I'd done was so repulsive that I froze. You wouldn't try to get more of the mask off. But the director, Michael Curtiz, wanted me to keep hitting . . . I didn't appreciate the director's lack of understanding about what happens to you when a moment like that occurs.") It's been argued that HOUSE gives the wax mask game away too soon, with a profusion of scenes in which the killer's true face is plainly visible. (How can we not know that the monster is Jarrod, it's reasoned, when we've witnessed his fiery ordeal and repeatedly seen the tragic result?) It's something of a surprise, then, to backtrack and find MYSTERY doing precisely the same thing, with the scarred Igor ready for his closeup, Mr. De Mille, in a very early scene set in the city morgue.

Does it matter, though? Is the mystery in MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM really so important? In fact, is it even understood? After all, it's doubtful that audiences expected the fiend to be anyone other than Lionel Atwill as Ivan Igor. (He sure wasn't going to end up being Frank McHugh as just plain Jim!) Could the real mystery not be whether the villain wears a false face, but which face is false? Then HOUSE OF WAX succeeds in keeping the secret so carelessly guarded in MYSTERY, because the final revelation that Jarrod's handsome face is really just an illusion, beneath which lies the monstrous reality—is diametrically opposed to what any sensible viewer should rightfully expect: namely, that Jarrod survived the fire with only his hands and legs scarred and crippled, that his handsome face is the reality and the monstrous one the warped and twisted creation of a gentle man driven mad by cruel fate.

Coming Up in Scarlet Street: I Married a Witch

THE RELUCTANT HORONE

HEROINE

PHYLLIS KIRK

interviewed by Michael Mallory

HOUSE OF WAX may have launched Vincent Price as the screen's premiere Grand Guignol artiste, but it is the lovely Phyllis Kirk who really holds the film together. Far from being a stereotypical helpless heroine, Kirk's Sue Allen is a rare mix of beauty, brains (it is she, not the police, who first cracks the case) and resourcefulness, the kind of strong leading lady that would not be seen again in horror films for another 25 years, until Jamie Lee Curtis in HALLOWEEN. But even more important than that, Ms. Kirk's textured and understated performance in HOUSE OF WAX anchors the film and keeps it from spinning out of control under the sheer force of the melodrama, the gallows humor, and the broader performances of Charles Bronson as a mute brute, Carolyn Jones as a giddy goodtime girl, and even Price himself as the urbanely demented Henry Jarrod. Born

Phyllis Kirkegaard in 1929, in Syracuse, New York, the actress' movie career spanned the decade of the fifties, from her debut in 1950's OUR VERY OWN to THE SAD SACK in 1958. On television she is fondly remembered as Nora Charles, opposite Peter Lawford's Nick, in television's THE THIN MAN, which ran on NBC from 1957 to 1959. It has been decades since Ms. Kirk has stepped before a camera, largely because of a physical condition that impaired her walking, though she keeps up with the current scene in Hollywood as a member of the Motion Picture Academy. Phyllis Kirk graciously granted this rare interview to Scarlet Street from her Los Angeles home, just days after seeing HOUSE OF WAX for the first time in many years . . .

PHYLLIS KIRK: I watched HOUSE OF WAX just recently. They played it the day after Halloween on one of the cable things, and I hadn't seen it in years, so it was great fun for me to watch it. It's a good little film. Of course, that's largely because of the brilliant director.

couldn't see in 3-D.

PK: Right, he couldn't see at all in dimension. That's always been my great story about him.

SS: But his not seeing in 3-D probably enhanced the film.

PK: Well, it did, because some other nut would have just overdone it, ad nauseam. He shot it so people would not be dependent on the 3-D glasses. I mean, I thought that the ping-pong thing was quite enough! (Laughs) Andre de Toth was a very talented man, and I said to somebody the other day, he was much more appreciated in Europe than he was here. **SS:** At the time of HOUSE OF WAX, you

were a contract player at Warner Bros. Is that how you were cast in the female lead?

PK: Sure, because I was under contract. And I fought a lot about it, because I didn't want to be in some three-dimensional horror flick. I just went to Steve Trilling [Warner Bros.' casting director] and Mr. Warner and said, "I do not care to become the Fay Way of my time!" And they said, "Just trust us." (Laughs) I eventually trusted them.

SS: Paul Picerni tells a story about walking off the set of HOUSE OF WAX because he didn't want his head put in a real guillotine.

PK: Paul Picerni? I don't remember that. I probably had more to do with the fact that Charlie Buchinsky, who later became Charles Bronson, scared him to death. I think he was using the Method to convince himself that he indeed was a deafmute gnome. Buchinsky was not my favorite actor on that particular film, but I grew to admire him a lot over the years.

SS: Were you uncomfortable in the climactic scene when you're stretched out nude and they're about to pour wax on you.

PK: Well, I wasn't nude; I was covered. They put this flesh-colored covering all

director, Andre de Toth, who was a In HOUSE OF WAX (1953), Phyllis Kirk played PK: They made a mold of me. As I re-Sue Allen, one of horrordom's rare intelligent member, it was a full figure mold Scarlet Street: And of course, the great heroines. Even Vincent Price couldn't make a and they used that to make the figure, irony is that de Toth had only one eye and dummy of her!

over me, which was supposed to make me appear nude. Andre kept telling me to expose more of myself, but I kept telling him there wasn't more of myself to expose! (Laughs)

SS: Did being strapped onto that table make you uncomfortable?

PK: It was sort of a casket-like thing that I was lying in. But, no, it was okay. It didn't bother me.

SS: HOUSE OF WAX has an exceptional cast of talented actors. What are your recollections of Carolyn Jones?

PK: She was very good. I wasn't close to her, we did not become intimate friends, which sometimes you do on a film set. But I liked her. I thought she was fascinating looking, and I thought she was a good actress.

SS: And what about the star of the show: Vincent Price?

PK: Oh, well, I loved Vincent! He was a wonderful person and a wonderful actor and a very generous actor. It was very easy to work with him.

SS: He was a very flirtatious guy on the set, wasn't he?

PK: He was. Right, he was. But in a very nice way, you know? My favorite film of Vincent's was a long-ago film called THE EVE OF ST. MARK, in which he plays an American soldier. And he was brilliant.

SS: Did you know what he was going to look like in the scene where you break the wax mask and reveal his scarred face?

PK: I don't think it was a surprise. I think I had seen that mask. I can think of several scenes when I saw at least a glimmering of what the whole thing looked like. So it surprised me as an actress because it was supposed to scare the hell out of me! SS: Did you do all your own screaming in HOUSE OF WAX, or was there a profes-

> PK: Oh, no, that's me screaming. They enhanced it, I'm sure; they made it louder than it probably was, but that was definitely my scream. And you can tell—if you were a person who knew me very well or listened to me talk, you would know that it is me.

> SS: Your performance really holds the film together.

PK: You're kidding!

sional screamer on set?

SS: No, because you're the center of reality for all of the weird stuff that's going on. Was it your decision to play Sue Allen in such an understated way, and let your eyes do so much of the acting, or was that the input of Andre de Toth!

PK: I felt that she was a very well brought up young lady. Not necessarily wealthy, but well brought up, and under normal circumstances was quite quiet and wasn't a prima dona at all. And I thought about it in terms of the whole picture and decided that I felt that her part should lead gently to that terrible climax.

SS: It certainly works. Did you pose for the figure of Marie Antoinette?

shoulders-they encrusted my face

in wax; they did a wax mold of my head and shoulders. It was quite complicated, what they did. I hated every minute of it, but I was fascinated.

SS: And they did that for all the actors? There were never any scenes of the real actors holding still as wax figures?

PK: Never. I mean, not as far as I know.

SS: Vincent Price has been in the news lately because of the biography his daughter has written. It contains a few surprising revela-tions, such as the fact that he signed a secret loyalty oath to the House Un-American Activities Committee. His daughter couldn't believe that he did that.

PK: Well, I can't, either-although he was pragmatic, if nothing else, and he may have decided, "Shit, I've never been a part of these political things they're talking about, so I don't object to signing it." But a lot of people-like me, for instance-





LEFT: JOHNNY CONCHO (1956) starred a buckskinned Phyllis Kirk opposite an extremely unlikely cowpoke—Frank Sinatra! RIGHT: Phyllis watches intently as Jerry Lewis underplays in THE SAD SACK (1957). Peter Lorre was also featured in the comedy, but unfortunately the actress never got to work with him.

did not want to do that. I didn't want to do that and I never had to, thank God!

SS: That whole witch hunt era is something that people of later generations read about, but can't entirely comprehend.

PK: Oh, but I lived through it; I was there! And some of my dearest friends got sent off to the pokey and got their lives ruined. Oh, so ridiculous!

SS: There was a blacklisted actor in HOUSE OF WAX: Ned Young, who played one of the henchman, and who took up writing under the name "Nathan E. Douglas" after his career was ruined. His part in HOUSE OF WAX was probably his most prominent acting role.

PK: That I don't know. I knew of him in HOUSE OF WAX—we had one or two scenes together—but I don't remember ever seeing him in movies before that.

SS: Jack Warner made you stay at the studio during the filming of HOUSE OF WAX, didn't he?

PK: Yeah, well, he suggested it, and I understood why. It was the first major studio 3-D film, and he knew that I lived on the other side of the hill. I lived on the Beverly Hills side, and they were in the valley, and he said, "Have her stay in one of the quarters we have here on the lot, so she doesn't get in a car wreck, or doesn't get abducted," or whatever. (Laughs) So I agreed to do it. I thought it was silly, but I did it.

SS: Having not really wanted to do the film, did you try to avoid it after it was released?

PK: Well, I had to go to the premieres, the one in New York and the one in Hollywood. And when I went off to England to make THAT WOMAN OPPOSITE there, all they wanted to talk about was HOUSE OF WAX! I was very dismissive in those days, very outspoken.

SS: Do you have any recollections of the premiere of HOUSE OF WAX?

PK: Not especially. Like any premiere, there were mobs of people and then everyone went inside and they turned out the lights and showed them a movie.

SS: With no ping-pong man out front?

PK: As a matter of fact, I think that in New York as well as here, when the film opened, they had the guy with the ping-

pong! (Laughs) Can you blame me for thinking it was ridiculous?

SS: Let's talk about the beginnings of your film career. Is it true that you worked as a model and a dancer.

PK: No, I was never a dancer. I've seen that in print a million times and I have no idea where it came from. There's not a bit of truth to it.

SS: How do these stories get started?

PK: Writers have imaginations! (Laughs) I was a junior model; I did very young things for Harry Connover. Harry Connover was the big modeling agency mogul, he and John Powers. Then I was brought to Hollywood from New York, where I was working in the theater. A Goldwyn scout saw me in a play and then he brought Frances Goldwyn to see it, and she gave the go-ahead and I was on a train. My first film was OUR VERY OWN with Farley Granger and Ann Blyth and Jane Wyatt, lots of good people. And then I went to MGM.

SS: One of your first films for MGM was MRS. O'MALLEY AND MR. MALONE.

PK: Which I loved! It was such fun. James Whitmore was wonderful.

SS: And Marjorie Main. Was she anything in person like she was on the screen?

PK: Oh, yes. But you know, I think at that point in her life she just simply was all the parts she had played and would play.

SS: In 1954's CRIME WAVE, you worked once more with Charlie Buchinsky, who had by then become Charles Bronson. Was there any difference working with him in that film?

PK: Yeah, he had grown up a little at that time. And I also worked with Sterling Hayden, whom I loved working with—and Gene Nelson. There was a great to-do about Gene Nelson playing a straight, non-musical part. That was an Andre de Toth film! It was a dark little film, kind of *film noir*, and it was a good little film.

SS: You also worked with Ol' Blue Eyes himself, Frank Sinatra, in a 1956 Western called JOHNNY CONCHO.

PK: Well, there was no problem about that. I liked Frank a lot, and he was very special. I thought the picture was ridiculous, an absolutely sappy film. I'll never

forget the very first day of filming: we were outside and I was sitting in a director's chair, and Frank came by on a horse, and looked down at me and said, "You're a Jersey girl; you think my father will believe this is me?" (Laughs) Seeing him on a horse was very funny.

SS: THE SAD SACK, which you made with Jerry Lewis in 1958, was filmed shortly after his split with Dean Martin. Was Lewis nervous about striking out on his own?

PK: Jerry Lewis has never been nervous about anything in his life! No, he was not nervous. And as you can imagine, working with him was insane! But fun.

SS: Peter Lorre was also in that film, playing an Arab.

PK: Oh, that's right, that's right. But I didn't have any scenes with him; I had forgotten that he did that. But I wish I'd <u>had</u> scenes with him, because I adored him as an actor. I just loved him.

SS: One show that many people remember you for is THE THIN MAN TV Series. Was there any kind of trepidation about following in the footsteps of William Powell and Myrna Loy?

PK: Not really, and you know, it's interesting: I had never seen any of those films, and I made a point of not looking at them while I was doing the series, because I adored Myrna Loy and William Powell, and I didn't want to try to mimic her or be like her. Actually, somebody told me a long time ago that they thought I was very like her, which was interesting. The one thing I did in that series was I lightened my voice a little bit. I raised it up a notch, because I had a deep voice and a low voice, as I could tell the other night when I watched HOUSE OF WAX. I raised it a couple of notes to make it lighter, and I think that's what reminded this person of Myrna. Nora was the part I had the most fun with. It wasn't head-on comedy, but it was pleasantly amusing. SS: Did you get along with Peter Lawford?

PK: Very well. I knew Peter before we did the series and we were friends until the day he died.

SS: Was it difficult working with Asta?

Continued on page 54

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These three atmospheric stills show why the chase through the foggy, deserted streets of New York is among the most memorable scenes in fright films. Such scenes as this in HOUSE OF WAX made Vincent Price a horror star and Phyllis Kirk a very reluctant horror heroine.

PHYLLIS KIRK

Continued from page 52
PK: Well, the dog was heavy. A scene would start with Asta in Nick's arms, and in one second flat the dog would be in Nora's arms, and I would have to stand there and hold this 45 pounds of sinew and muscle. Many years later, when I began having walking difficulties, I accused Peter that it was all his fault! But I was only teasing.

SS: So he never had to do dog detail?

PK: (Laughs) Well, sometimes he got trapped, but most of the time he would figure out a way to pass Asta to me.

SS: In the movies and in the book, a major character trait of Nick and Nora Charles is their alcohol consumption.

PK: They wouldn't let us do that, because this was in the fifties. In the first few of them, if not more than that, they made us sleep in twin beds!

SS: Even though you were a married couple in the show?

PK: Right, but remember, this was '57, '58, and part of '59.

SS: You appeared in several live television productions for shows such as STUDIO ONE.

PK: Oh, yeah—and ROBERT MONT-GOMERY PRESENTS, and PLAYHOUSE 90, and God, all of them. I did all of those live shows, all of them, which was unusual because in Hollywood in the fifties and early sixties, it was considered not wonderful for actors to work in television as well as movies. Of course, all of that changed pretty rapidly.

SS: Everybody who has done live TV has a disaster or near-disaster story. Did anything happen to you?

PK: Well, I did a wonderful broadcast for PHILCO PLAYHOUSE, where I played a girl who becomes blind in her young adulthood and has to learn how to live with a seeing-eye dog. It showed her determination to be as much like her former self as she could be, even to insisting on wearing medium-height heels while she was training with the dog. And the night of the live performance, it all built to whatever the crescendo was and I wound up walking up a flight of stairs, and that was the end-except I let the dog's harness go, just before I got to the top of the stairs. It wasn't funny as much as it was maddening. And the director, Fred Coe, never forgave me! (Laughs)

SS: You were also a regular on THE RED BUTTONS SHOW, playing Red's wife.

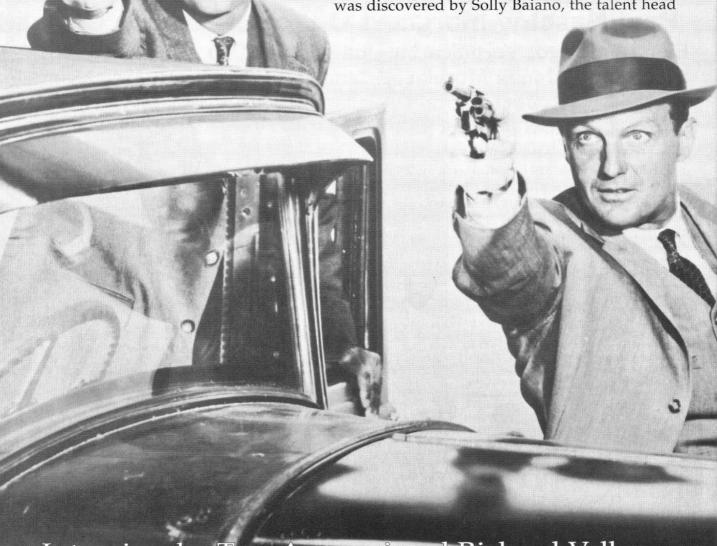
PK: Yes, he had a very cute show and he was darling in it, but he went through wives-actresses playing his wives-like doses of salt. I was the ultimate: I was the one who worked well with him and he was happy with, so from the day they hired me until the series went off the air, I did it.





He almost lost his head over a pretty girl in HOUSE OF WAX (1953), but Paul Picerni survived to score on television's classic series about Eliot Ness and his battle against prohibition gangsters, THE UNTOUCHABLES.

Picerni was always slated to fight on the right side of the law. In fact, he had intended becoming a lawyer before the acting bug took a bite out of him in high school. World War II interrupted, but when he returned to the stage he was discovered by Solly Baiano, the talent head



Interview by Tom Amorosi and Richard Valley



PAGE 56: Paul Picerni and Robert Stack battle the bad guys on television's THE UNTOUCHABLES. ABOVE: Under the tutelage of HOUSE OF WAX entrepreneur Professor Jarrod (Vincent Price), Scott Andrews (Paul Picerni) puts a little more pain into a tortured face that, minus mustache and goatee, somewhat resembles—Professor Jarrod.

at Warner Bros., and found himself before the cameras fighting the war all over again in BREAKTHROUGH (1950). Three years later, he was starring opposite Vincent Price, Phyllis Kirk, and Frank Lovejoy in HOUSE OF WAX.

Paul Picerni proved anything but untouchable—or unapproachable—when *Scarlet Street* asked him to tell us of his many adventures in Hollywood....

Paul Picerni: Well, I was under contract to Warner Bros.—I'm going back now to 1953—and I tested for a movie called THE EDDIE CANTOR STORY. Not for the leading part; a fella named Keefe Brasselle was already set to play Eddie Cantor. It was just after THE JOLSON STORY was a tremendous success with Larry Parks, so the same producer, Sid Skolsky, decided to do CANTOR. He tested several actors for the part of the Jewish doctor who is Eddie Cantor's friend in the movie and I was one of the fellas that tested. I was a front runner, but he also tested Arthur Franz. Finally, after several weeks of doing the tests, Sid Skolksy called me into his office as a courtesy and said, "Paul, we like your tests and we know you're a fine actor, but since Eddie Cantor has black hair we wanted to cast a doctor with blonde or brownish hair, so we gave the part to Arthur Franz!" I was shattered! I said, "I understand, Mr. Skolsky," and I left. I went across the street—there was a little drug store over there, right across from Warners—and I was sitting there with George O'Hanlon, crying the blues and telling him how disappointed I was. Well, Joe Breen, who was an associate producer for Bryan Foy at the studio, came in, and he said, "What the hell's wrong with you?" I said, "Joe, I just lost a part in THE EDDIE CANTOR STORY." He said, "Well, don't worry about it, you've just been cast as the leading man in HOUSE OF WAX!"

Scarlet Street: Cheered you up, didn't it? **PP:** I'll say—because that was a big thing, HOUSE OF WAX in 3-D, with Vincent Price and Phyllis Kirk and Frank Lovejoy! So it gave me a lesson in life, that sometimes at your lowest ebb something good will happen! There was no place to go but up and that's what happened! Next thing I know I'm on the set with Andre de Toth,

the director, who had one eye and couldn't see 3-D! (Laughs)

SS: So he couldn't see the effects he wanted. **PP:** He only saw it in 2-D, but he got what he wanted. However, when it came to the big fight scene between me and Charles Bronson—who was known at the time as Charlie Buchinsky—he said, "Gentlemen, the depth of focus of the 3-D camera is so great that we cannot use stunt people. You must do your own fight scene." Well, I was fairly handy, and I

knew that Charlie was athletic, so fine; we did our own fight scene. He had a sadistic touch, this Andre de Toth. He had Charlie beat the bejesus out of me! He lifted me up over his head, he slammed me to the floor, and we were throwing chairs at each other and axes and everything that we could throw toward the camera, so that in 3-D it would fly over the audience's head.

SS: Did you have any other difficulties with de Toth?

PP: Not only me! Andre had Vincent do that fire sequence himself at the beginning of the film. He had him fall under that beam and everything. I'll tell you an interesting story about Andre De Toth. We got to the sequence where Charlie and I had the big fight and he renders me unconscious. I'm unconscious and he picks me up-he did it himself, bodilyand he carries me over to the guillotine. He puts my head in the guillotine. He puts the block of wood over my head and arms. Now this was a real, workable guillotine from the French Museum. It had a razor-sharp blade, a 35-pound block of wood, and it rose up maybe 12 or 15 feet. Well, we get that shot. Andre is lining up the next shot. He says, "Paul, you are in the guillotine and Charlie, you start to unwind the rope to release the blade, and Frank, you come in!" Frank Lovejoy. "You see Paul in the guillotine and rush over,





LEFT: Paul Picerni gets his hand stuck in Frank Lovejoy's navel in a tense scene from I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE F.B.I (1951), one of a number of early fifties films designed to show Hollywood as All-American and free of Commies. Picerni and Lovejoy were later reunited in HOUSE OF WAX (1953). RIGHT: Paul takes time out for a little fun on HELL'S ISLAND (1955). PAGE 59: In costume for THE ADVENTURES OF HAJJI BABA (1954).

you grapple with Charlie and fight, fight, fight. You look at Paul, you take the block of wood off his head, and you pull Paul out and zoom, down comes the blade! That is the next shot, Mr. Marley." Pev Marley was the cameraman. "You light this shot for me, please." And he starts to walk away! I say, "Mr. de Toth? Andre, are you going to shoot this in two takes? You know, separate cuts—one with my head coming out and the other with the blade coming down?" He says, "No, we do it in one take." I say, "Mr. de Toth, how do you propose to do it in one take?" He says, "Red Turner, the property man." Little short guy, bald headed, and always had a cigar in his mouth. "Red Turner will sit on top of the guillotine. When Frank pulls your head out, he will release the blade!" I say, "Andre, suppose there's an earthquake? Suppose Red Turner has a heart attack and drops the blade prematurely?" He says, "Only hurts you for a second. Don't talk about it." And he walks away! (Laughs)

SS: How reassuring!

PP: Now I go over to Pev Marley and I say, 'Pev, is this a gag? Is he really gonna Pev says, 'That's the way he's gonna do it.' I go to Jimmy McMahon, the assistant director. 'Jimmy, is this legitimate?' Jimmy says, 'I just called Charlie Greenlaw in the production office and I told him about it. That's the way he's gonna do it.' I go to Red Turner, the little property man. 'Red, are you gonna climb up there and do this?' Red says, 'What am I gonna do? I just called Eric Stacey, the head of props, and told him!' So I didn't know what the hell to do! I'm a young guy under contract, I got a wife and two or three kids. I go over to Andre and I say, "Mr. de Toth, this isn't a case of getting hurt. This is a case, if something goes wrong, of being beheaded!' He says, "Don't talk about it. You make me nervous.' I make him nervous! And he walks away again. (Laughs)

SS: You're making him nervous!

PP: So Pev Marley lights the shot and I don't know what the hell I'm gonna do. I'm under contract, I'm making \$250 a

week, I got a wife and two kids and a third one on the way-what am I gonna do? I'm going crazy! Finally, Andre says, 'All right, actors! Positions, please!' And Jimmy McMahon says, 'Actors, take your positions!' Frank goes to the entrance where he's gonna come in with the cops. Charlie goes over by the guillotine, and I just stand there. And Andre says, 'Come on, Paul, put your head in the guillotine." And I say, 'I'm not gonna do it. Andre.' There's this silence on the set. 'Put your head in the guillotine! Coward!' And the hair stands up on the back of my neck! And I read my next line like Marlon Brando. I say, 'If you call me a coward again, Andre, I'll fucking kill you!' (Laughs) And he screams, 'Send that actor home! He's finished in this picture! Send him home! Get him off my set!' So I go home. I didn't know what the hell was going to happen. And I sit home for three days. I talk to my agent. 'What are they going to do?' And my wife, who's a fortress of strength, says, 'Don't worry about it.' Anyhow, three days go by and Joe Breen . .

SS: The associate producer.

PP: ... he comes to my house and says, 'Paul, I've been sent by Bryan Foy and Andre de Toth as an emissary to tell you that Andre wants you to come back to the show. He wants you to request that he shoot the scene the way he set it up. I'm your friend and I'm telling you this only because I have to. If I were you, I'd say ba fongul.' (Laughs) So I say, 'Well, that's my answer. Tell Andre ba fongul." So now I figure I'm finished, right? A day goes by and Solly Baiano, the talent scout that discovered me, calls. 'Paul, come on in. They've changed the scene and Andre wants you.' So I go in and I figure they're gonna shoot it in two cuts. I get there and see Eric Stacey, who's head of props. It's like a funeral parlor, now. Everything is quiet. Eric Stacey is standing on a platform about six feet high, he's got a steel bar. They drilled a hole underneath the blade and he's got a steel bar underneath the blade. He's out of camera range, of course. I'm still with my head in the guillotine. It's still one take like Andre wanted it. Frank was going to pull my head out and Eric Stacey would pull the bar and the blade would fall. Well, now, what am I going to do? It's not like Red Turner is sitting up there, so I'm not going to win the argument about the earthquake and the heart attack. So we did it in one take and that's the way we did it!

SS: That's amazing.

PP: Frank Lovejoy pulls my head out and down comes that blade! And the dust flies-but fortunately not my head! Oh, I got a little sequel. Solly Baiano sends me a script. It's a Randolph Scott movie called RIDING SHOTGUN. So I read the script. Randy Scott pulls into this weigh station to change the horses, and he says to Judd-that's the character I'm supposed to play—he says, 'Judd, will you take the stagecoach into town?' And I say, 'Yeah, I'd be glad to.' So I take Randy's place on the stagecoach, and we're galloping through the hills and all of a sudden the Indians attack. Judd gets an arrow through the heart, the stagecoach goes over a cliff . .

SS: And poor Judd is dead?

PP: Judd is dead! And he never comes back! So I call Solly Baiano and I say, 'Solly, I just starred in HOUSE OF WAX and now you've got me playing one scene with Randy Scott and I'm dead on page three! Why are you doing this to me?' And he says, 'Well, I don't know. Andre de Toth requested you; he's directing it!' (Laughs)

SS: That's what you get for being cooperative!

PP: But in 1981, when they rereleased HOUSE OF WAX, they invited Vincent Price and Andre de Toth and me to the screening on Wilshire Boulevard. Andre spots me—I hadn't seen him since we did the picture—and he says, 'Paul! Paul Picerni, how are you, sweetheart? How are you, my darling?' He gave me a big hug! (Laughs)

SS: Incredible! Did you attend the original premiere when HOUSE OF WAX opened?

PP: I went to New York for the premiere with Vincent Price and, having come from New York, the audience was filled with

"Now this was a real, workable guillotine from the French Museum. I didn't know what the hell to do! I'm a young guy under contract, I got a wife and two or three kids. I go over to Andre and I say, 'Mr. de Toth, this isn't a case of getting hurt. This is a case, if something goes wrong, of being beheaded!"

my entire family—my mother, my brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts. Out of the 4,000 people in the Paramount Theater, I think 1000 of 'em were my relatives! (Laughs) And then I went on to tour with the film for about 10 weeks. They sent me all over, every little city, all over the Eastern coastline....

SS: Was it just you from the cast?

PP: Just me, because I was under contract. They were only paying me \$250 a week, so they could afford to send me out with a press agent. Every place I went the profits went up, so they kept me on the road. They had Gordon MacRae do the stage appearance with me in Chicago, and I was sharing a suite with Gordon and his wife, Sheila. I got a phone call from Mort Bloomenstock, the head of publicity, and he said, 'Paul, from Chicago we'd like you to go directly to San Francisco.' I said, 'But Mort, I haven't seen my wife and kids for seven weeks now! Can I go to LA and then go to the Filmore Theater in San Francisco?' And he said, 'No, no, you go directly to the Fairmont in San Francisco and be there for the opening.' I was upset about it, so Gordon said, 'Gimme that phone!' He was a big star at the time. He said, 'Listen, Mort, Paul is not going to San Francisco; he's going directly home.' Mort said, 'No, he's got to go to San Francisco!' So finally Gordon said, 'Listen, I'll tell va what.' He was acting as my agent.' He'll go to San Francisco if you fly up his wife and kids.' And Mort said, 'Okay.' So my wife and kids met me at the St. Francis Hotel and we went to the opening at the Filmore Theater. And then they went home and they proceeded to send me to Seattle and Portland and Tacoma and Walla Walla! (Laughs)

SS: No wonder it was such a successful picture! Let's talk a bit about your costars. You mentioned Frank Lovejoy....

PP: I did quite a few pictures with Frank. See, he was under contract, too, and we made I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE FBI, BREAKTHROUGH, HOUSE OF WAX, THE SYSTEM, and probably one or two others I can't recall. Frank had a dry sense of humor. I remember the very first day on the set of BREAKTHROUGH. I was a young kid and this was my first big part. I did a scene with Frank and he looked me square in the eye and said, 'Is that the way you're gonna do it?' It almost broke my heart, and to this day I don't know if he was kidding or not! (Laughs) It took me a long time to get to like Frank. The last time I worked with Frank, he was doing a series called MEET McGRAW at Desilu Studios. I had a scene with him and he suddenly sat down. He closed his eyes and took a breath and

said, 'Paul, do me a favor, will ya? There's some little pills on my dressing room table. Go get 'em for me.' They were nitroglycerin and I ran and got them right away—and from that moment on I just loved Frank.

SS: When you saw the rushes for HOUSE OF WAX, were they in 3-D?

PP: Well, in those days they didn't allow actors to see the rushes. Once I snuck into the back of the theater, and I heard some of the discussion between Jack Warner and the director. 'Where the hell did you get that bum? Get her out of the picture! Don't put the damned camera on her anymore!' And oh, God, I hoped they wouldn't say anything about me. So they didn't allow the actors to see the rushes, except maybe the big stars.

SS: You didn't have any scenes with Carolyn Jones in HOUSE OF WAX, at least not when she's alive. But did she substitute for the wax figure of herself in any of the later scenes?

figure of herself in any of the later scenes? **PP:** No, it was a wax figure. It was never Carolyn Jones. Of course, I met her on the film. I didn't have any scenes with her, as you say, but I worked with her later, on a soap opera called CAPITOL just before she died. I was on that soap opera for about two or three months as a recurring character, and we had a nice reunion. I loved Carolyn; she was another talent.

SS: What about Phyllis Kirk?

PP: Phyllis Kirk was a delightful girl. She was so beautiful, so pretty. The last remembrance I have of Phyllis is of being with her when we were in New York publicizing the film. The publicity department had Phyllis and I go all over New York. We posed in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral at the bronze doors. We took a ride through the park in a hansom cab and they took pictures of us.

SS: The producer, Bryan Foy, was one of The Seven Little Foys, wasn't he?

PP: And his father was Eddie Foy, the vaudeville comic.Tell you a little story about Bryan. Bryan told me this years ago; he said, 'You know, I couldn't dance. So my father told me to just move my feet fast, that nobody would know the difference. So when I make a movie I do it the same way; I make it fast; I make it move so that nobody can see the mistakes!' (Laughs) And HOUSE OF WAX just moves right along and it holds together, and the people just loved it. **SS:** Not only that, but the 3-D is used so

imaginatively, too! **PP:** Oh, the paddleball! The paddle-

ball is just unbelievable, the way that ball just flies over your head! Of course, they had Charlie and me

throwing axes at each other, but that still wasn't as effective as that paddleball. That paddleball was something else! SS: HOUSE OF WAX was based on an earlier

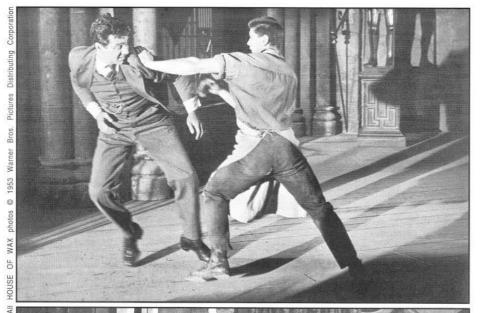
film called MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM, which was directed by Michael Curtiz.

PP: He was a great director—CASABLANCA, CAPTAIN BLOOD, CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE—and every time he did a picture he would test people. I was the assistant on the tests. If it was a John Wayne movie, I would do the John Wayne part and over my shoulder they would test all these actors. They'd always use me, because I was under contract. And Curtiz would always say, in that Hungarian accent, 'Paul Picerni, next picture I give you big part! You're going to be big star, Paul!' (Laughs)

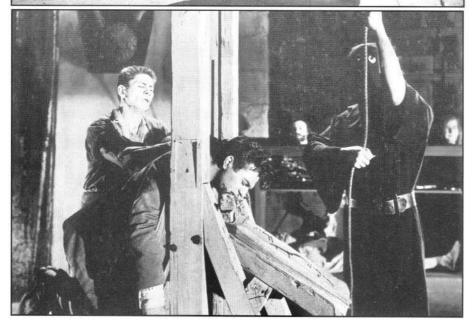
SS: Let's touch on THE UNTOUCHABLES. **PP:** So you want to touch on THE UNTOUCHABLES, huh? The very first UNTOUCHABLES was a DESILU PLAYHOUSE production starring Robert Stack. It was a two-parter with Neville Brand as Al Capone, right from the book *The Untouchables* by Elliot Ness. Phil Carlston

was the director. He cast

me as Tony Leguri, one of the mobsters who ran the Montmartre Hotel in Chicago for Capone. It was a minor role, but a good part—especially one scene with Bill Williams. He's infiltrating







After being roughed up in a freefor-all with Charles Buchinsky (the future Charles Bronson), Paul Picerni almost lost his head—literally—under the blade of a genuine French guillotine. It's all in a day's work in the HOUSE OF WAX.

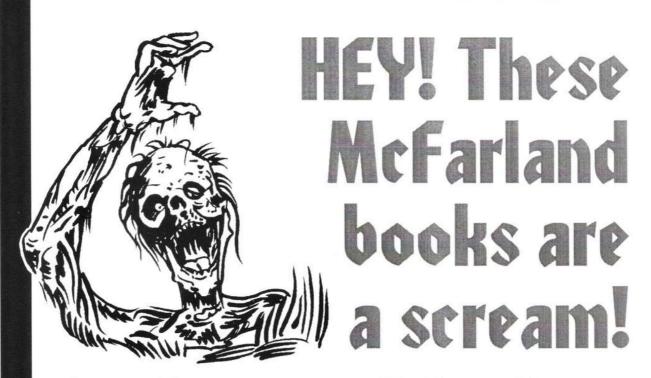
the mob and he comes up and I say, 'Come on up to the office and we'll get a couple of broads and have a good time.' I get Barbara Nichols up there and I slap her around. Anyhow, that's the part I played, and the show was a smash hit-Emmy Awards and all that—so ABC wanted to do a series. They wanted Bob Stack, naturally, as Eliot Ness, and he could write his own ticket because all he did was DESILU PLAYHOUSE as a twoparter. They didn't have him tied up for any series. So he negotiated. Bob ended up with writer approval, director approval, producer approval, cast approval—I mean he had everything, because they wanted him so desperately. In addition to that, they paid him \$10,000 an episode, which was unheard of in those days. Anyhow, they cast Bob, started the show, and the number two guy-they had four Untouchables—the number two guy was Jerry Paris. Jerry was a good actor, but he had a comedic touch. He went on to become a comedy director for THE DICK VAN DYKE SHOW.

SS: And he also played Jerry Helper, the next-door neighbor.

PP: Right! So he only did 13 shows. I don't know if Bob said it or somebody else said we don't like the chemistry, but they recast. So for the second 13 shows, they put in Tony George. Tony George was the kind of guy who had ambitions. He wanted to be a star, and I have a feeling he stepped on Bob's toes, so at the end of the next 13 episodes, they recast! At the same time, Quinn Martin was out as producer, and new directors and writers came in. THE UNTOUCHABLES was getting heat from all these Italian organizations about the use of Italian names on the show-Al Capone, Frank Nitti, Joe Catalano

SS: Well, those were their names!

PP: All the Italian organizations were putting heat on the show for using Italian gangsters. The unions in New York, which were controlled by the Italians, would not load Pall Mall, the sponsor's cigarettes, on the ships to ship them out. Frank Sinatra was called in, along with Johnny Rosselli, who was connected. They had a meeting with Desi Arnaz at the Wilshire Hotel, and they said, 'Look, no more Italian names. The boys don't like it. Call him Smith, call him Jones Yeah, but it doesn't work with Smith.' 'I'm sorry, but that's it. No more Italian names.' And then Johnny Rosselli said, 'Why don't you have an Italian actor play one of the Untouchables, like Paul Picerni?' Next thing I knew, Jerry Thorpe called me in. It was at one of my lowest times as an actor, just like it was before I did HOUSE OF WAX. You're at your low point and all of a sudden you get some-



Jacques Tourneur

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Our Man on Baker Street

by David Stuart Davies

Putting Sherlock on Stage

Many good things that have happened to me in life have come about by accident, and putting Sherlock on stage is one of them. This year I had the pleasure of seeing a one-man play I have written about Sherlock Holmes performed on stage in London, at the Edinburgh Festival, and at various theatrical venues around Britain. What has enhanced my pleasure is the critical praise the drama has received and the positive response of the audiences on seeing it. But let's start, if not at the beginning-for that we'd have to go to a little Yorkshire maternity hospital 50 years ago-but at a time when the play was not even an idea.

I have been interested in Sherlock Holmes since my teenage years and, for the last 10 years, have been writing about him for a living. With four Holmes novels under my belt and books about the Holmes movies and Jeremy Brett's portrayal of the character, I am fairly steeped in the sleuth from Baker Street. I also write a regular column for Scarlet Street and edit Sherlock Holmes—The Detective Magazine, a bimonthly publication which eats up a lot of my time, but also makes certain that a day does not go by when I don't type the words "Sherlock Holmes" on my computer screen!

It was in the course of my duties as editor of the magazine that the whole play thing started. In March 1997, I visited a theatre in Newcastle-under-Lyme, a small midlands town, to review their production of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES. It was a good show and I was particularly impressed with the

actor playing Holmes: he seemed to have the right bearing and manner. His voice was also wonderfully incisive.

Holmes is a difficult part to play convincingly. Fleshing out Arthur Conan Doyle's character has led even the most talented actors-and Edward Woodward-to fail. This is partly due to the fact that the public has a preconceived idea of how the sleuth should behave; coupled with this, Doyle has provided the character with a specific set of tricks—the violin, the pipe, the drug addiction, and deductive brilliance. These two aspects have to be catered for within a performance. What is acceptable on the printed page would seem shallow and wooden unless the actor playing Holmes breathes a sense of humanity and realism into the role. Watching Roger Llewellyn as Holmes in THE HOUND, I saw an actor who had managed this delicate and difficult balancing act.

I met Roger in the bar after the show and fate took a hand. Roger was RADA trained and, as I thought then and do now, an actor of the old school. We had a chat. He said that he'd enjoyed playing Holmes and his agent had been particularly enthusiastic about his performance. "What I'd really like to do is a one man play about Holmes," he said. I laughed. Not a viable concept, I thought. Holmes must have his Watson. Watson is the medium through which we perceive this enigmatic character. I was reminded that even Jeremy Brett's Holmes needed his Watson (Edward Hardwicke) when he played in Jeremy Paul's two-hander THE SECRET OF SHÉRLOCK HOLMES. I was

convinced that Holmes on his own would not work. (Actually, HOLMES ALONE was the first working title-but not for long!) The conversation drifted off onto other matters and that was that. Or so I thought.

Then lightning struck—or whatever dramatic force that electrifies a writer with a creative surge. I was driving home from the theatre when an idea flashed into my consciousness. It came from nowhere and was not fully formed, but by the time I got home I had worked out a way of presenting Sherlock Holmes in his own one-man play. In essence, it was simple. In the stories, we really only know Watson's Holmes and, of course, Watson is no genius and therefore he has limited perceptions. Only Holmes knows Holmes really well. Let him tell his own story-reveal himself. But what would prompt him to do it? The death of Watson, of course. Without his Boswell, he could only confide in himself. I reasoned that Watson's death would seem like the end of everything for the ageing detective and he would experience regret at not having told his old friend how he really felt about him. Returning to his old Baker Street rooms, so full of memories, after Watson's funeral, he would be prompted to confide, to confess to the imaginary Watson. In this way the dramatist, i.e. me, could do two things. I could remind the audience of some of Holmes' cases and his brilliant detective work; and I could also go deeper into his psyche and reveal the real man, not the revered image of Watson's writings. (Later, we used the slogan "The Man . . . not the Thinking Machine" on the flyers). This at least was my starting point.

After several telephone calls, I managed to get in touch with Roger and told him about my ideas. Would he be interested in reading the play if I wrote it? He would. So now I had to write it.

Sherlock Holmes (Roger Llewellyn) returns to his Baker Street rooms following the death of Dr. Watson in David Stuart Davies' one-man play.









As Sherlock Holmes, Roger Llewellyn (RIGHT) follows in the formidable footsteps of Basil Rathbone (LEFT), who played the Great Detective in a series of films for 20th Century Fox and Universal Pictures and on radio, and Jeremy Brett (CENTER), who made the role his own in a series of television films for Granada.

If I'm honest, the first act virtually wrote itself. Writing this play, rather than an article or novel about Sherlock, freed me from the restrictions and conventions which had, to some extent, straitiacketed me in the other formats. With a drama I could allow my imagination to fly. I knew that, as long as I was true to the idea of the character of Sherlock Holmes, I could be more daring, more adventurous, more me than ever before. My sense of freedom was further enhanced by the realisation that, in constructing such a play for the theatre, it had to appeal to a general audience, not merely a Sherlockian one. The text, and therefore the drama, had to be accessible to those folks sitting in the stalls who may have never read a Sherlock Holmes story. I think I smiled my way through Act One, I so enjoyed writing it.

I sent the first act to Roger and waited his reaction. It came a few days later. I remember the moment. I was opening a bottle of wine for our dinner when the phone ran. "It's a triumph," he crowed down the wires, in the first of what turned out to be many extravagant phone messages. Little did I know at the time that not only had he read the script, but several of his friends had, too, including Gareth Armstrong, a talented actor and director. Everyone liked it. And so I was instructed to "get on with Act Two."

I was walking on air—the Cheshire cat had nothing on me. But now I had to construct Act Two. I had a fairly clear idea what I wanted to do with it. The first half of the play ends with Holmes at the Reichenbach Falls and his supposed death. The second half would begin with his return. However, as I began to type Act Two, I found it harder going. I was less satisfied with what was emerging on

the page. I knew I wanted to make The Hound of the Baskervilles a set piece. This was Holmes' most famous case, after all, and it lent itself to a theatrical retelling. Another incentive was that, structured as the play was, I did not have to rely on a luminous cardboard-cutout dog. The descriptions alone would bring the chills.

I finished the play and gave my own one-man perfomance of it to Kathryn, my wife, unsung editor, and most perceptive critic. We thought the play worked and it ran for a respectable 90 minutes.

I sent it off to Roger and waited for another enthusiastic phone call. I did not get one. After a few days, Roger rang, but the voice was sombre. In essence, he thought the second act did not work: "It was too much like the first act. The audience has to be presented with something that develops the drama—something that surprises them." Something that bloody surprises them? What? Holmes is really a woman? An alien? A hologram? A transvestite? French?

Also, Roger thought that too much time had been given up to The Hound of the Baskervilles.

With a gathering grey cloud about my head, I said gloomily that I'd think about it. Various suggestions were made to me, including the introduction of a mystery into the second act. I didn't want to do that: it would unbalance the whole. A case to solve would only serve to weaken the focus on Holmes the man. Details of his detective work were only used to illustrate his character in all its many moods. However, I realised that what Roger had said only confirmed what I'd tried to bury in a dark corner of my consciousness: Act Two did not work. No Cheshire Cat this time.

Then I did what all writers do when

they require inspiration: I went to Paris! Well, actually, Kathryn and I had booked a week's holiday and so, along with my passport, a wallet full of francs, and our luggage, I took along a notebook with the hope that the Parisian background (assisted by French wine) might unlock the secrets of Act Two. Walking in the warm sunshine and stopping at the pavement cafes for a glass of something refreshing stimulated the old thought process and I scribbled away merrily as ideas began to present themselves to me. When I returned home, I had a rough version of a new and challenging Act Two. It certainly did contain a surprise revelation that I believed enhanced the drama and led it naturally to its very dramatic denouement. I went back to the beginning-which was to when Holmes and Watson meet.

That was only the beginning for the readers. The real beginning was Holmes' childhood—one to which he never refers in the stories. Here was a chance to contemplate, to invent, and to provide reasons for the way the boy Holmes became the man. Ideas of sexual repression, a passion for justice above the law, a hatred of drunkards, seemed to worm their way into my construction. Also, I was able to see that Holmes' terrible confession in Act Two was directly related to speeches and actions in Act One, particularly his attitude to Eustace Brackenstall, a drunken wife-beater from the story "The Abbey Grange." Holmes makes mention of the character again in Act Two when he observes, bitterly, that Brackenstall and his own father came "from the same stable."

This time Roger and Gareth, who said he wanted to direct the play, gave it a two thumbs up. Now we had a play.

Coming Up in Scarlet Street: The Picture of Dorian Gray

The Last B Movie...

TERRORINTHE WAX MUSEUM

by <mark>Michael Mallory</mark>



In 1973—a time when the Hollywood studio system was uttering its final gasp and the hills were alive with the sound of backlots being bulldozed—a modest, entertaining thriller called TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM slipped into theaters. Most reviewers at the time were unimpressed by this murder mystery disguised as a horror film, though many marveled at the cast: Ray Milland, Elsa Lanchester, Broderick Crawford, John Carradine, Louis Hayward (lured out of semi-retirement), Patric Knowles, and Maurice Evans. It disappeared quickly, as did a bookend picture titled ARNOLD, a comedy thriller made by the same unit featuring some of the same actors.

Yet there is something very striking about TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM, something the critics then and now seem to have overlooked. With its rich cast of veterans and foggy backlot atmosphere, its hurry-we're-running-out-of-film direction, and a script that gallops over its plot holes like a runaway horse, the film turned out to be a cinematic



coelacanth, a thing thought to be extinct: a good, old-fashioned B movie. It can be argued that the picture, one of the few theatrical releases from Bing Crosby Productions, is the last true honest-to-God B movie ever made. Except for the length (93 minutes—too long for a classic B), use of color, and one brief flash of a nude "wax figure" (with a bikini tan), TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM might have been made in 1944 by Universal—with most of the same cast!

The story is set in Victorian London, shortly after the horrible murders attributed to Jack the Ripper. Saucy Jack is still at large, though his effigy can be seen in the Chamber of Horrors Wax Museum of Claude Dupree (Carradine).

When the slightly batty sculptor turns up murdered, circumstantial evidence seems to point to the wax figure—or the real Ripper himself! But Inspector Daniels of the Yard (Evans) and his assistant, Sgt. Hawks (Mark W. Edwards), have plenty of other suspects with which to con-

PAGE 64: As Dupree, John Carradine (standing in front of a "wax statue") expresses TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM (1973). LEFT: Flexner (Ray Milland) licks his chops over the Lizzie Borden tableau. BELOW RIGHT: Sgt. Hawks (Mark Edwards) interrogates Karkoff (Steven Marlo in a none-too-subtle makeup) about the murder of Dupree. BELOW LEFT: Flexner and Burns (Broderick Crawford) argue in Tim's Pub next door to the wax museum. Laurie (Shani Wallis) and Tim (Louis Hayward) look on. BOTTOM RIGHT: Inspector Daniels (Maurice Evans) tackles the museum murder case.

tend. Chief among them are Amos Burns (Crawford), a vulgar, boorish New York entrepreneur who was pressing Dupree to sell his collection; Flexner (Milland), Dupree's associate who was promised the business; Dupree's niece, Meg (Nicole Shelby), the legal heir; Meg's money-grubbing guardian, Julia (Lanchester), who takes over the operation,



using Dupree's murder as a publicity angle; Southcott (Knowles), Dupree's pompous lawyer, who was told about a change in the old man's will right before the murder; and, last but not least, Karkoff (Steven Marlo), a deformed, halfblind, deaf-mute hunchback who lives in the waxworks cellar, and who, it is rumored, might be Dupree's illegitimate son.

Whew! With all that work sorting out suspects, the police can't be blamed for dropping in for a nip at the pub next door to the Wax Museum, run by Tim Fowley (Louis Hayward), who was also Dupree's landlord. Entertainment at the pub is provided by Laurie Mell (Shani Wallis of OLIVER! fame), a tart-with-a-heart who can really belt out a song

The death of Dupree, who was vacillating about selling out, actually makes it easier for Amos Burns to buy the wax collection, but his victory is short lived. So is he. Just hours



after a bitter public argument with Flexner over ownership of the museum, Burns is killed in the foggy streets of London by a Ripperesque figure in a black cloak, and his body dumped in the Chamber of Horrors.

İt's enough to give Meg nightmares. Awakening after one such dream (in which the wax figures come to life and chase her) she hears a voice muttering her name and, to her horror, sees her dead uncle standing in her bedroom!

Meanwhile, solicitor Southcott unexpectedly receives a letter from Dupree (not a missive from the grave, just a letter lost in the mail) indicating that the old man's estate is far more valuable than anyone thinks. A fortune is hidden somewhere in the Chamber of Horrors. Meg is the sole heir, but fortune or no, she's had enough and wants to leave the eerie museum. Sgt. Hawks (for personal as well as profes-

sional reasons) asks her to stay. He is convinced that the threat against

her is all too human.

That night, after the pub closing, Laurie Mell is killed by a figure disguised as a bobby. Inside the wax museum, the sound of a falling guillotine awakens Meg. She creeps downstairs to investigate and finds that the Marie Antoinette exhibit now features a grisly new prop-Laurie's head. Not thinking very logically, she rushes down to the waxworks where something even worse awaits herthe wax figure of Jack the Ripper, now alive!

Karkoff tries to defend Meg, who is one of the few people who treated the ugly brute with kindness, but during the struggle he is thrown into the vat of bubbling wax. Sgt. Hawks finally appears and chases the cloaked figure up into the exhibit room where, after a terrific fight (shot in good old Republic Studios nail-down-the-camera fashion), the Ripper falls on an Meg (Nicole Shelby) and Julia (Elsa Lanchester) be taken seriously. (His dubbed-in the murderer is wearing a rubber WAX MUSEUM. Ripper mask.

Everything is now clear to London's finest: the killer—a former actor and master of disguise-donned the Ripper's garb and snuck into the museum at night, searching the exhibit for Dupree's hidden treasure. If anyone happened to come along, he simply took the place of the wax figure. Dupree and Burns were killed to prevent the sale of the collection and its conveyance out of the country. The killer then posed as both Saucy Jack and the dead Dupree in hopes of frightening Meg away, the better to continue his search unhindered. As for Laurie Mell, she had seen the killer sneaking into the museum and had to be silenced. Ironically, the killer was closer to the treasure than he ever realized: the surgical tools in Jack the Ripper's medical bag are made of solid platinum.

It's a classic B mystery explain-a-thon, done to perfec-

tion and wrapped up before the puzzled viewer can even say, "Huh?" But we still don't know the identity of the killer. Was it Flexner after all? Or Southcott? Only in the very last shot is the true terror haunting the wax museum

revealed, as his wax likeness is unveiled (and stop reading right here if you want to see the picture first). It is mildmannered publican Tim Fowley. A crucial clue was that Fowley is the museum's landlord, and as such he could get into the building and its every room whenever he wanted.

He had the keys

This surprising twist brings to an end the Last B Movie, and belatedly, a whole style of moviemaking.

Given the sheer number of big names crammed into a 90-minute movie, it's not surprising that some of the actors get short shrift. Maurice Evans in particular seems wasted as the Scotland Yard Inspector, and the ubiquitous John Carradine has little to do but stir the vat and intone his love for his wax "children" before he's dispatched by the Rip-

Still, the filmmakers were smart enough to team up some of the old pros, creating some very amusing moments. Former Universal B star Patric Knowles is great as the haughty, humorless solicitor, the perfect foil for the venomous dithering of Elsa Lanchester as Julia. Broderick Crawford, presenting what one fears is the image all Britons hold of rich Americans, contrasts very nicely with the dour urbanity of Ray Milland. And thirties star Louis Hayward,

in his last film appearance, is the very picture of paternal kindness towards Shani Wallis' tarty songbird. Hayward offers such a warm and genial presence that the denouement comes as a real shock.

Top-billed Milland as the temperamental Flexner gives a churlishly effective performance, biting the heads off his lines then chewing them up with relish. His sardonic lecture tour through the Chamber of Horrors, delivered with dripping, Vincent Pricean glee, is marvelous. The real scene thief of the picture, though, is Lanchester, who manages to make the callous, greedy Julia somehow likeable and very funny. An actress who could convey more character by taking a breath than most performers can with a soliloquy, Lanchester works to keep everyone around her on their toes.

The "youngsters" are also effective, though Steven Marlo as Karkoff is perhaps too grotesque to zie Bear.) Mark W. Edwards and Nicole Shelby hold their own

quite well against the veterans, and special mention should be given to Peggy Stewart, who livens up a bit part as a shrill charwoman with a performance that comes across as

a wonderful homage to Una O'Connor.

There is something indescribably eerie about wax figures, which translates well to film. The most unsettling scenes of HOUSE OF WAX (1953) are contained in the fire sequence, in which the historical figures placidly accept their fate while their hair, clothes, and faces blacken and melt. TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM forfeits that unsettling element by using real actors as the wax figures, something that was necessitated by the script, which required the effigies to come alive, give chase, and, in one dream sequence, even speak. (Though let's not kid ourselves: real people are also cheaper to acquire and hold up better under hot studio lights.)

Naturally, that called for performers who could stand as motionless as statues in a convincing manner—a skill not found on every actor's resume. Producer Andrew J. Fenady ingeniously solved this casting problem by hiring 12 members of the Laguna Beach Festival of the Arts, a Southern California event that includes a pageant in which performers pose as the subjects of famous paintings and artworks. For the most part, the illusion is successful, with the actors adopting stiff, angular, unnatural poses—but sharp eyes can catch the occasional wobble among the stiffs, particularly

from Rosa Huerta's Lucretia Borgia.



axe and is killed. Hawks sees that discover an intruder causing TERROR IN THE grunts sound like a drunken Foz-

One potentially great clue, though, is ruined by the casting of a real actor as one of the horrors. While interrogating Flexner after the murder of Amos Burns, eagle-eyed Sgt. Hawks notices that the wax figure of Jack the Ripper resembles the suspect. Flexner admits to it, calling it a touch of artistic vanity, as no one really knows what the Ripper looks like. The audience is left to draw all sorts of inferences about the ease with which Flexner could disguise himself as the figure. The only problem is that Ray Milland and Don Herbert, who plays the Ripper, look nothing alike, not even remotely, so this neat bit of misdirection (on paper) becomes a strange and puzzling moment on film. Nevertheless, in good old B-movie style, the filmmakers just charge on ahead and hope that we

Aside from its cast, TERROR's biggest asset is William Jurgenson's atmospheric, underlit photography, which makes the most of Stan Jolley's small but finely crafted sets. (Jolley used Madame Tussaud's in London as the inspiration for his Chamber of Horrors). Director Georg Fenady, chiefly an Broderick Crawford, John Carradine, and Steven Marlo stir up episodic TV director, manages to capture this eerie trouble in the wax museum. atmosphere, but can't quite finesse it. Still, when it workssuch as in the sequence of the Ripper's stalking of Amos Burns, in which we glimpse the fog-shrouded killer almost subliminally—it really works. Fenady's chief accomplishment, though, is that he keeps things moving: Damn the inconsistencies, full speed ahead!

Jameson Brewer's script (based on Andrew Fenady's story) is quite complex (more so than can be synopsized here) and offers 'enough red herrings to open a fish market. It is not always logical, exactly, but it continues to tease

Though really a mystery, TERROR IN THE WAX MU-SEUM was sold as outright horror. Featured prominently in the film's advertising was the slogan: "Karkoff is here in the Wax Museum," along with a picture of monstrous Steven Marlo. And if some eager movie buff were to mistakenly



read "Karloff" instead of "Karkoff" . . . well, no real harm done. (This bit of marketing duplicity becomes even more amusing when one notices that the name in the closing credits reads "Karkov.")

TERROR is hardly on a par with some of that year's competition—THE EXORCIST, THE WICKER MAN, or THEATRE OF BLOOD—but it remains a satisfying little puzzler with a once-in-a-lifetime cast who, if not exactly at

their peaks, still knew how to strut.

Forget all the textbook definitions of a B movie relating to booking practices. We know what Bs were: fast, frugal, frequently fantastic, but most of all fun. TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM is all of that and more. It is also a fond reminder that, for one brief moment in 1973, they actually made 'em like they used to

THE THIN MAN

Continued from page 53

THIN MAN obviously comes out on top. (Nick and Nora tallied up 78 half-hour episodes from September 20, 1957, through June 26, 1959; the Norths managed 57 half hours between October 3, 1952, and July 20, 1954.) The episode titles alone conjure up nostalgia for a bygone period of TV

Nick and Nora Charles (Peter Lawford and Phyllis Kirk) shoot lovely ducks in an episode of THE THIN MAN. Asta joins in the fun and games.



history. A few samples: "Beatnik Murder" (Nick and Nora meet Maynard G. Krebs?), "Come Back, Darling Asta," takeoff, naturally, on the William Inge play COME BACK, LITTLE SHEBA), "Brownstone Murder" (Lawford's pal Frank Sinatra puts in a cameo appearance), "Kappa Kappa Caper," "Murder in Mink" (these days, anyone wearing a mink is apt to suffer that fate), "European Death Spa," and "The Screaming Doll." Both Lawford biographies describe THE THIN MAN as a failure. Certainly it wasn't a major hit. (It suffered tremendously when, in its final season, it was scheduled opposite a brand new detective series that <u>did</u> turn into a major hit: 77 SUNSET STRIP.) But it had a respectable run and still delivers the goods if you're able to track down a few episodes—which I did.

"Beatnik Murder" contains the kind of dialogue found only on THE MANY LOVES OF DOBIE GILLIS and in certain AIP fright flicks, particularly A BUCKET OF BLOOD (1959) and THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (1960). Poet/ songwriter Freddy Dee (Paul Richards), composer of the unreleased "I Loathe You, Darling," meets the Charleses at a Village coffee house, where he takes a liking to Nora and dislike to Nick: "I don't like you. You I like, but him . . . I mean, you, man, you're oblong." They're joined by murder suspect Meana (Eugenia Paul), who likes Nick and dislikes Nora: "You know, I think your husband has any number of feasible facets . . ." Later, Nora is confronted by Freddy, her choice for the murderer. Sez he, "What you see is my corporeal envelope. But I don't exist. As a matter of fact, neither do you." Sez she, indignantly, "Oh, yes I

Continued on page 74

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PAUL PICERNI

Continued from page 60

thing good. Jerry Thorpe, the new executive producer, called me in and said, 'Paul, I know you're a well adjusted actor and a good actor. How would you feel about being second banana to Robert Stack in THE UNTOUCHABLES?' I said, 'How would I feel? It's the hottest thing on television! I'd love it!' And that's how I got the job!

SS: No trouble with Robert Stack?

PP: Bob and I got along great. I told the other two guys, Nick Georgeotti and Able Fernandez, 'Don't upstage me and don't upstage Bob. He's numero uno and I'm numero due, and you guys just fall in place and we'll all get along fine.' And it worked out great, because later on I saved Able's job a couple of times when he showed up late and a little inebriated. And I helped Nick get a raise when he needed it, so it worked out great. We went on to do 90 episodes and I loved Bob. The other two guys, we've been friends all through the years.

SS: Was Desi Arnaz around much during the production?

PP: You know, we shot a lot night for night in the backlot at Desilu. We had 40 acres back there where we did all the chases and all the Chicago street scenes, and Desi would show up at least once a week at night. He was always jovial and friendly and happy. Lucy never came by, but Desi did.

Sue Allen, on heroines. Eve dummy of her!

you the r
Flynn. We 22, which the was always jovial and friendly and happy. Lucy never came by, but Desi did.

SS: What's been the most memorable part of your acting career up to now?

PP: Well, the greatest part I ever played was not on film. I had the good fortune of playing St.Thomas Moore in A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS on the stage. But the most fun—well, I had a lot of fun in a lot of different pictures, like working with Telly Savalas and Burt Lancaster in Durango, Mexico. But the picture that stands out in my mind—I don't know why—was MORA MARU, the one I did with Errol Flynn, Raymond Burr, Ruth Roman—can I tell you a quick Errol Flynn story?

SS: Do you have to ask? Of course!

PP: Well, MORA MARU was a simple story about a deep-sea diver. Errol was the diver, Raymond was the heavy and I was kind of the oscillating heavy. I was like Italy, I go to the German side and then to the American side! (Laughs) You didn't know whose side I was on till the very end when I finally went with Errol—which was fortunate. Anyhow, I'll tell



PP: You know, we shot a lot night for night in the backlot at Desilu. We had 40 acres back there where we did all the Chicago street dummy of her!

In HOUSE OF WAX (1953), Phyllis Kirk played windbreaker—no t-shirt, just a windbreaker—pair of slacks, no underwear, pair of sneaker, no socks. Every day the wardrobe man would the chases and all the Chicago street dummy of her!

you the reason I fell in love with Errol Flynn. We shot most of the film on Stage 22, which was a big swimming pool. They'd built the Mora Maru the boat, right on that soundstage; we shot OP-ERATION PACIFIC on that same stage, a big submarine right there in the pool. Anyhow, Errol and I are sitting in a couple of director's chairs, resting between scenes. Suddenly a messenger boy comes and says, 'Mr. Flynn, I have a message for you.' At that time, Errol was married to Patrice Wymore and Patrice was on an island in Jamaica and expecting a baby, so Errol would call her every day to see how she was doing. Anyway, he opens up this message and he smirks and says, 'Take a look at this, guinea.' He always called me guinea or dago! And I open it up and it says, 'Dear Errol, it's been brought to my attention that your phone bill has exceeded \$5,000. Please take care of this as soon as possible. Signed Jack Warner.' Errol flips it over and writes on the back, 'Dear Jack, I'm willing to forget about this if you are. Love, Errol.' And he sent it back to Jack Warner! (Laughs)

SS: Was there any location work on MORA MARU?

PP: We went down to San Pedro to shoot on the real Mora Maru. So we finish shooting and Errol says, 'Come on, guinea, let's have a drink.' So we go back to his suite and who's there but his son, Sean. Sean Flynn was the son of Lily Demeta and Errol. He was raised in France by his mother, and so the kid had a French accent. He was about 17. He looked nothing like Errol. Errol was just a beautiful man, built even at that time when he was in the twilight of his career, and Sean was a skinny kid with pimples all over his face. Errol says, 'Sean, my boy, while we're down here in San Pedro, I'm gonna get you fucked and sucked till you get rid of those pimples on your face.' And the kid responds in his French accent: 'All you do is talk, talk, talk! Where are the girls?" (Laughs)

SS: You must have a lot of stories about Flunn.

PP: He was very good friends with John Barrymore, and he wore a Barrymore hat with a little feather on its side. He'd come in wearing a windbreaker—no t-shirt, just a windbreaker—pair of slacks, no underwear, pair of sneakers, no socks. Every day the wardrobe man would have socks, underwear and a t-shirt

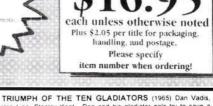
for him. And at night he'd wear it home. I said, 'Errol, what are you doing with all those t-shirts and socks and underwear?" He says, 'I just throw them in a closet. I get the biggest thrill out of stealing from Jack Warner!' (Laughs) In the film, Errol's cabin boy is killed. Errol and I have to go to church for the short service. Now, as I said, all through the film Errol had the pants, windbreaker, shirt, hat, sneakersthat was his wardrobe. So Errol says to Gordon Douglas, the director, 'Gordon! Gordon, my boy, I've had this same wardrobe for the entire picture, but don't you think this guy would own at least one blue suit to go to the boy's funeral?' Gordon says, 'Well, you know, Errol, it's just a short scene. You walk in, say a prayer, and you leave.' 'I know, but I should at least have one suit to go there.' Well, they made Errol this beautiful suit, probably spent \$400 or \$500 on a new blue suit for Errol. And you know what happened—he wore it home that night!

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SCIENCE FICTION

THE MISTRESS OF ATLANTIS* (1932 aka L'ATLANTIDE) Brigitte Heim, Jean Angelo, Pierre Blanchar. Two soldiers sear Sahara for Atlantis but are captured and taken to the lost city, are taken before the Atlantean Queen who has 50 mummifile. are taxen before the Atlantean Queen who has 50 mummined ex-lovers. An endless nightmare follows, climaxing with murder! A sci-fi fantasy classic. NOTE: Our video master is from an outside source and is noticeably softer than our usual product, but still quite acceptable. S017. RIP ROARING RILEY* (1936, Puritan) Lloyd Hughes, Marion Burns, Grant Withers. Riley heads for an island to investigate weird

happenings. On the island, traitors have forced a scientist to develop a powerful poison gas. Riley intercedes. When the gas container is ruptured, a death-carrying cloud spreads over the island! \$12.95 plus \$2.05 for packaging, handling, and postage. 16mm. FH44 BOMBS OVER LONDON (1937) Charles Farrell, Danny Green,

Margaret Vyner. A secret group of military industrialists plot to start a war. An outcast scientist makes a small fleet of wireless controlled airplanes for them that--in the film's exciting climax—drop powerful bombs all over London. Great lab scenes. A must 16mm. \$118

DESTINATION SATURN (1939) Buster Crabbe, Constance Moore, C. Montague Shaw, Jackie Moore. Buck Rogers wakes up in the year 2500 and faces a bevy of weirdly dressed space-age thugs. Superb feature version of the famous Crabbe serial. 16mm. \$220

CAPTAIN CELLULOID AND THE FILM PIRATES* (1968) Robert Clayton, Doris Burnell, Alan Barbour, Barney Noto. A four chapter mini-serial b/w tribute to the movie serials of the '30s and '40s. chapter mini-serial only induite to the movie Senials of the 30s and 40s. A sinister villain known as "the Master Duper," abducts negatives to silent classics and duplicates them using his "Instant Transmission Printer." Captain Celluloid tries to thwart him. Highly recommended to all serial and soi-if fains. Silent with music and effects. 16mm. **3221** INCREDIBLE PARIS INCIDENT*(1968) Roger Browne, Domini

Boschero, Richard Peters. Our hero is Argoman, a costumed crime-fighter armed with telexinesis and other powers. However, Argoman makes love to a haughty villainess, which causes him to lose his powers for six hours! During this period she plans an incredible heist. An ultra-campy blend of James Bond and Starman. Color, 16mm S222

ESCAPE FROM GALAXY 3 (1976) Cheryl Buchannon, James Milton, Don Powell. A pair of space lovers finds themselves in a far off galaxy surrounded by high tech hostilities. 'Excitement follows as they try to escape from the grasp of crazed alien rulers. Color, 16mm. S223



HORROR

MURDER BY INVITATION* (1941, Monogram) Wallace Ford, farion Marsh, Sara Padden. A full fledged old dark house horror hiller with the usual trimmings: a mysterious hooded killer, screams the night, secret panels, disappearing bodies, sinister shadows, etc. irmilar to Universal's Black Cat (1941). Definitely in the style of all shapescep berge films.

Monogram horror films. The only thing missing is Lugosi. 16mm. H268 DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* (1955) Michael Rennie, Cedric Hardwicke, Mary Sinclair. The hottest horror find of the year! It's an hour episode of the old "Climax" series (commercials included) hosted by Bill Lundigan. Rennie is excellent as Jekyll/Hyde. Hardwicke and by bill Lutiligal. Healther's accelerated several property of the Sinclair also shine in support. Rennie's transformation scenes are excellent considering this was broadcast live. A must. 16mm. H269 WITCHCRAFT (1961) Darren McGavin, Blanche Yurka. A lost

b/w pilot to an old TV horror series. This is a quality show that you'll watch more than once. A man helps his friend battle a witch who has put a hex on him. Creepy and well done. Plus: WHO GOES THERE (1955) Pat Hingle, Lisa Gaye. A rare fantasy TV pilot about a young couple who rent a house haunted by Custer's ghost! Directed by Jack There's a drive-in intermission between shows. 16mm. H270

CASTLE OF THE CREEPING FLESH (1968) Howard Vernon, Adrian Hoven, Janine Reynaud. After his daughter is murdered, a crazed surgeon vows to resurrect her from the dead. He begins killing innocent victims and purging their bodies of organs in his mad attemp to return life. Nudity, violence, and a rape scene. Color, 35mm, H271

DEMONS OF THE MIND (1971, Hammer) Paul Jones, Patrick Magee, Gillian Hills, Robert Hardy Several girls are missing! A legendary demon is blamed. In a nearby castle, a deranged count keeps his kilds under lock and key, thinking they're possessed. A hypnotist comes in to unlock the dreaded family secrets. NOTE: This is the original HBO pre-record no longer available in stores, recorded in SP. We have a limited quantity, so order soon. Color, 35mm. H272

LEGEND OF BLOOD CASTLE (1972) Lucia Bose, Espartaco

LEGEND OF BLOOD CASTLE (1972) Lucia Bose, Espartaco Santoni, Ewa Aulin. A well-done variation of the Countes of Bathory legend. The evil countess regularly bathes in the blood of virgins to cling to her fading youth. Very vampirific. Color, 16mm. H273.

BEYOND THE DOOR (1975) Richard Johnson, Juliet Mills, David Colin, Jr. After the success of THE EXORCIST, many of us flocked to see this possession-inspired imitation. There are elements or ROSEMARY'S BABY, as well. Mills plays a pregnant mother besieged by demonic possession. Lots of multi-color gook is spewed orth. Marc Bassa direct the sequel. Batted B. Color, 16mm. H274. Mario Bava directed the sequel Rated R. Color, 16mm, H274

CATHY'S CURSE* (1977) Alan Scarfe, Beverly Murray. A young couple suspects their little girl may be possessed by the spirit of a dead relative. What's with her doll? This is another of many '70s horror films to be inspired by THE EXORCIST. Color, 16mm. H275

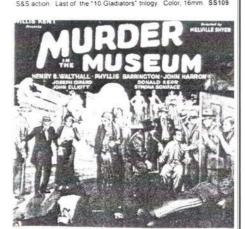
SWORD AND SANDAL

CAROLINE AND THE REBELS (1962) Bridget Bardot, Jean-Claude Pascal, Magali Noel. The son of a royal Spanish family leaves home to fight the invading French. Tons of action, intrigue, and swordplay follow. He soon discovers a dark secret of his past that alters his life forever. Many sensuous moments. Color, 16mm. SS105

LOVES OF SALAMMBO (1962) Jeanne Valerie, Ed Purdom, Jacques Sernas. An army of mercenanes demands payment from the beautiful Salammbo of Carthage for their aid in fighting Rome. She and the head of the mercenaries become lovers...until it's discovered the gold payment has vanished! Letterboxed, color, 16mm. SS106

TEN GLADIATORS* (1963) Roger Browne, Dan Vadis, Susan The first title in a very popular sword and sandal trilogy. A roup of daring gladiators is captured by Nero's troops. Later, they are cheduled to fight to the death in the arena! Can they escape? Good word 8 sandal thrills. From a nice color 16mm print. S\$107 SPARTACUS AND THE TEN GLADIATORS (1964) Dan

Vadis, Helga Line, John Heston, Ursula Davis, Vadis leads a 10-pack of gladiators who are banished from the arenas of Rome. They eventually end up joining forces with Spartacus and his army of slaves and help fight against the armies of Rome. Color, from 18mm. SS108



FORGOTTEN HORRORS

NOTE: All titles in this section are just \$12.95 (unless otherwise plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handl

SINISTER HANDS (1932, Kent) Jack Mulhall, Phyllis Barrington, Mischa Auer. Auer is a strange oriental mystic who comes to a creepy mansion to read his crystal ball to a small gathering. During the reading, the lights go out! Suddenly there's a groan and a body falls to the floor. Muhallal is called in to find out exactly who done it. It seems all the guests have a motive. Gee...how unusual. 16mm. FH54

all the guests have a motive. Gee. how unusual 16mm FH54
GET THAT GIRL (1932, aka FEAR MANSION) Dick Talmadge,
Shirley Grey, Fred Malatesta. A really weird little film. A young girl,
who is about to receive a large inheritance, is abducted to an isolated
sanitarium. Behind its mysterious walls is a crazed doctor performing
strange experiments. He's a developed a process for changing people
into mannequins! Can Dick rescue her in time? From 16mm. FH55
THE WHISPERING SHADOW (1933, Mascot) Bela Lugosi,
Malacom McCanac Visu Tatherall. H. M. Wilkhall. Those

Malcom McGregor, Viva Tattersall, H.B. Walthall There's weird goings-on in the eerie wax museum of the mysterious Professor Strang. A fearsome killer is on the loose! This is the well-edited feature version of the Mascot serial of the same name. From a nice old 16mm print FH56 PICTURE BRIDES (1933, Allied) Regis Toomey, Alan Hale,

Drottly Mackail, Dorottly Libaire Four picture brides arrive in the deepest part of the wild Brazilian jungle to meet their husbands-to-be at a remote diamond mine. They find their lives in danger by the murderous sex fiend owner of the mine, played to the hilt by Hale Great performances by all. A steamy jungle setting, 35mm. FH57





MURDER IN THE MUSEUM* (1934, Kent) H.B. Walthall, John Harron, Phyllis Barrington. A creepy little chiller centered around a weird sideshow museum filled with freaks and misfits. When a shot rings out, a prominent local politician fails to the floor, dead! A snapp rings out, a prominent local potential relation to the floor, dead A shappy reporter tries to figure out who the my sterious killer is. One frightening moment comes during a scene involving a "live" mummy. 16mm. FH58 BEAST OF BORNEO* (1934) John Preston, Mae Stuart, Eugene Sigaloff. A mad scientist named "Boris Borodoff," conducts

Eugene Sigaloff. A mad scientist named "Boris Borodoff," conducts strange experiments involving men and apes. He and his beautiful assistant go deep into the jungle to secure a live ape so he can complete his experiments. This film contains the most laughable ape 'growl' ever committed to film. Really campy. From 55mm. FH59 A SCREAM IN THE NIGHT." (1935, Commodore) Lon Chaney.

Zara Tazi, Sheia Terry Manuel Lopez. Lon plays two parts: a handsome detective and a scar-eyed killer. Detective Lon is stationed in the orient, seeking the notorious thief, Johnny Fly. Evil Lon is Johnny's murderous hen

JAWS OF THE JUNGLE (1936) Teeto, Minta, Walla Hordes of monstrous vampire bats drive a Ceylonese tribe from their village into the jungle, where they encounter every jungle animal imaginable See

ghastly foolage of a vampire back killing a peacock 35mm. FH61 in RIP ROARING RILEY* (1936, Puntan) Lloyd Hughes, Marion Burns, Grant Withers. Riely neads for an island to investigate weird happenings. On the island, traitors have forced a scientist to develop a powerful poison gas. Riley intercedes. When the gas container is ruptured, a death-carrying cloud spreads over the island! 16mm, FH62

SPAGHETTI AND EURO WESTERNS

DEAD FOR A DOLLAR (1968) George Hilton, Gordon Mitchell John Ireland, Monica Pardo. Three roving outlaws pull off a \$200,000 bank job. They all try to double cross each other, but in the end a local

pank job. They all try to double cross each other, but in the end a local prostitute gets the upper hand on all of them. Color, 16mm SW26 BOOT HILL (1959) Terrance Hill, Bud Spencer, Victor Buono, Lonel Stander. Woody Strode. Eduardo Ciannelli. What a cast! This colorful western features two tough cowboys who run into a number of bad dudes, along with some pretty wild women. Strode plays an exgunfighter turned trapeze artist! Not bad at all. Color, 16mm. SW27

YOU'RE JINXED FRIEND, YOU'VE MET SACRAMENTO (1970) Ty Hardin, Christian Hay, Jenny Atkins, A peaceful cowboy forced into a showdown with a notorious town boss and his gang thugs. Thinks get sticky when the boss kidnaps the cowboy's kids ar holds them hostage! Mucho

olds them hostage! Mucho action follows. Color, 16mm. SW28 EL TOPO (1971) Alexandro Jodorowsky, Mara Lorenzo, David Siva. A vicious gunfighter ruthlessly cleans up a lonely town of thugs and desert outlaws. Soon, he also is killed, but later is resurrected. He then takes on a new mystical persona and sets out to rectify the injustices of his past. Considered a landmark film by many. PLEASEI Keep the kids away -nudity and strong violence. NOTE: This is the Keep the kids away industry and strong violence. No is, in its is use original Red River pre-record no longer available in stores, recorded in SP. We have a limited quantity, so order soon. Color, 35mm. SW29

SINISTER SERIALS

NOTE: All titles in this section are just \$19.95 (unless otherwise oted), plus \$2.05 per title for packaging, handling, and postage.

PHANTOM OF THE WEST* (1931, Mascot) Tom Tyler, Dorothy Gulliver, William Desmond 10 chapters. A small town is terrorized by a ruthless pack of thugs known as the "League of the Lawless." Their leader is an eene, masked killer known as "the phantom." Tom tries to bring the mystenous bandit to justice. The trail eventually leads to information about the murderer of his father! A must for Mascot serial Mastered from a beautiful 16mm original print. SL31

THE DEVIL HORSE* (1932, Mascot) Harry Carey, Frankie Darro, Noah Beery, Sr., Al Bridge, 12 chapters. An accidental death results from a man's effort to capture a wild horse. The brother of the

ain man manipulates a young boy in a revenge plot. 16mm. SL32 PERILS OF PAULINE (1933, Universal) Evelyn Knapp, Robert Allen, William Desmond, James Durkin, Sonny Ray. 12 chapters. This senal has it all: cliff-hanging predicaments, villainous scoundrels, chase scenes, fisticuffs, etc. How can you go wrong? 16mm. SL33
THE FIGHTING MARINES* (1935, Mascot) Grant Withers, Adrian Morris, Ann Rutherford, Robert Warwick. 12 chapters. A

marine sergeant invents a new 'gyro-compass,' which is coveted by master criminal and his gang. Who is the mysterious 'Tiger Sharl As Mascot serials go, this one's pretty darned good. 16mm. SL34

CAPTAIN CELLULOID AND THE FILM PIRATES* (1966) Robert Clayton, Doris Burnell, Alan Barbour, Barney Noto. A four chapter mini-serial b/w tribute to the movie serials of the '30s and '40s. A sinister villain known as "the Master Duper," abducts negatives to silent classics and duplicates them using his 'instant Transmissio Printer.' Captain Celluloid tries to thwart him. Highly recommended t all serial and sci-fi fans. Silent with music and effects. 16mm. S221

ACTION/ADVENTURE

PLEASE NOTE: All titles in this section are just \$12.95, plus \$2.05

SKYWAY (1933, Monogram) Ray Walker, Kathryn Crawford, Arthur Vinton, Lucien Littlefield. A brawling flyer becomes involved with a banker's daughter. When 10-grand ends up missing, he gets the blame. He takes off in a sea-plane, streaking over the ocean in an effort to catch the real crook. A fun Monogram. From 16mm AA19 SUBMARINE BASE* (1943, PRC) Alan Baxter, John Litel, Fiff

D'Orsay. As PRC action films go, this one's not bad at all. Baxter is a former gangster on a remote island who has his own submarine dock where he routinely sells torpedos to enemy subs! Litel is a stranded se-NY cop who tries to stop Baxter's straitorous activities 16mm AA20 S.O.S. PACIFIC* (1959) Eddie Constantine, Eva Bartok, Richard

This IS the best Constantine film. Eddie's a tough Altermologist. This is the bear accessed and is being flown back to the mainland. During the flight, a fire erupts injuring the pilot. Eddie is called upon to land the plane near a remote island. After a hard landing, the plane sinks and the survivors discover—to their horror—that a nuclear bomb is set to go off on the island in less than five hours! Shot in English (hear Eddie's real voice). Our highest recommendation, 16mm, AA21

ear Eddie's real voice) Our highest recommendation. Two
HEROES IN HELL (1974) Klaus Kinski, Ettore Manni. Two POWs make a bold escape from their prisoner of war camp. soon join the French Underground movement in a daring conspiracy against the Third Reich. A must for all Kinski fans. From 16mm. AA22

JUNGLE THRILLS

EAST OF BORNEO* (1931, Universal) Charles Bickford, Rose Hobart, Georges Renavent. A 4-star jungle thriller! Hobart takes a treacherous river cruise into the deepest part of the African Jungle, racing every imaginable peril. She soon arrives at Morudu, a lost city of ancient temples and giant stone idols. There she finds her husband involved with the city's tyrannical ruler. Some eye-popping moments of jungle horror. The climax is unforgettable as a nearby volcano erupts and spews boiling hot lava onto the city. Top special effects. Stunning interior and exterior sets. Our highest recommendation! 16mm. J002 WHITE GORILLA (1947) Ray Corrigan, Lorraine Miller, Frank

Merrill, Charlie King. This wacky jungle thriller is a scream! When you've got lots of crazed natives, giant one-eyed stone idols, and Ray Corrigan as a monstrous ape, who cares about the plottine? This ones a real party film. The Psychotronic Film Encyclopedia called it one of the cheapest and funniest leatures ever made." 35mm, J059

GORILLA (1956) Lars Ottoso, Sven Nykvist. A hunter travels deep into the jungle to hunt down a killer ape that's been bumping off the local natives. His efforts are hampered by a pretty, but pesky female journalist. A very interesting film, shot on location. Many great scenes of wild animals and native rituals, most of which a

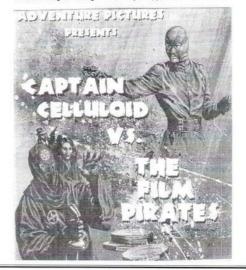
unstaged Do they really kill a gorilla, or is it fake? Color, 16mm J060 KARZAN AND HIS MATE (1973) Johnny Weissmiller, Jr., Simone Blondell, Roger Browne. Safari film footage reveals a white jungle man, flying through the air. Another safant takes off to find him. A fairly well done retelling of the Tarzan legend. Color, 16mm. J061

EXPLOITATION

DARING DAUGHTERS (1933) Marion Marsh, Joan Marsh Kenneth Thompson, Bert Roach. A big city gold-digger, played by the beautiful Marsh, is visited by her naive sister who wants to see what eadurun Marish, is visited by the Inalve state with Marish to See Marish for in the fast lane is all about. Marion has other ideas. Can she save er sister from the lewd guy in the bedroom? Campy fun. 16mm. X099 NARCOTIC (1933) Harry Cording, Joan Dix, Patricia Farley, J

Stuart Blackton, Ir. A Dwain Esper exploitation classic. A young medical student thes opium once, then twice, then before you know it his lite has turned to hell. Take a look at the horrors—1930s style—of the dreaded life of a drug addict. Not to be missed. 35mm. X100

WHEN THE GIRLS TAKE OVER (1962) Robert Lowery Marvin Miller Jackie Coogan, Jimmy Ellison. This offbeat movie starts off like an adventure comedy, but veers into light exploitation toward the climax as a bevy of scantily clad babes are set loose before the cameras. Lowery's a Castro look-a-like rebel who holds a prime minister's daughter hostage. Extremely campy, but fun. 16mm. X101



SPYS, ESPIONAGE, & INTRIGUE

THE VERSAILLES AFFAIR (1960) Jean Tissier, Danielle Godet, Ivan Desny. A fast-moving espionage thriller about two top secret agents who find themselves in a desperate race against time for the possession of valuable secret documents. Sudden death waits nd every corner. Interesting script, lots of action, 16mm, SP38

AGENT FOR PANIC (1964) Brad Newman, Eric Douglas. An action-packed spy movie! A secret agent is sent in to find the whereabouts of his former sidekick who is hidden somewhere in Czechoslovakia. Precious secret information is at stake. This is a very well paced espionage thriller and we recommend it. 16mm. SP39

13 DAYS TO DIE* (1965) Thomas Alder, Peter Carsten, Chitra Ratana. Here's a neat piece of intrigue laced with bizarre and exotic settings, including an ancient lost city. The plot involves a priceless black ruby and a master thief's demand for three million dollars for its return. It seems everyone who wears the ruby eventually dies. What strange power does it hold? The "spiders on the ceiling" scene is a knockout. Lots of man-eating crocodiles, too. Great fun. 16mm. SP40

OUR AGENT TIGER (1965) Roger Hanin, Margaret Lee, Michel Bouquet A French submarine discovers gold off a foreign island secret agent is sent to recover it, but runs into a web of danger fir revolutionaries who want the gold to buy arms. Color, 16mm. SP41



MYSTERY-SUSPENSE-FILM NOIR

PLEASE NOTE: All titles in this section are just \$12.95, plus \$2.05

THE SHADOW LAUGHS (1933) Hal Skelly, Rose Hobart, Harry Morey, Walter Fenner. A bank cashier is pressured by a mysterious criminal to repay his gambling debts. The shadowy criminal kills a bank guard after the cashier takes a hundred grand from the vault. He then shoots the cashier and vanishes with the loot! A snappy reporter tries to figure out who the crazed killer really is. From 16mm. M291

THE HEADLINE WOMAN (1935, Mascot) Roger Pryor, Heather ngel, Conway Tearle, Jack LaRue, Russell Hopton, Ward Bond, Ford terling. A great cast helps make this a top indic crime film. Pryor is a crackerjack reporter who witnesses the murder of a gangster. Roger hides away a beautiful dame who's suspected of committing the crime. He then finds out she's the daughter of his boss! The real killer, LaRue, is after them both. So are the police. Bond has a great bit as a reporter who always calls in his stories while snoozing. Mascot nake them any slicker or better than this. Superbl 16mm. M292

ELLIS ISLAND (1936) Donald Cook, Pegp Shannon, Jack LaRue An Ellis Island immigration agent tries to locate a million in stolen loot. He ends up in a creepy, overgrown graveyard where LaRue and his thugs have dug up a weed-covered grave. They're very interested in what's buried within. Soon there's an exciting chase olving the thugs and a hearse! 16mm, M293

I DEMAND PAYMENT (1938, Imperial) Jack LaRue, Betty Burgess, Lloyd Hughes, Guinn Williams, Matty Kemp. A down-on-his-luck guy gets involved with a loan shark whose henchmen regularly bump off non-payers. After his wife attempts suicide, he kills the brother of one of the gangsters he works with. Watch out! A great script for such a cheapie, and it's helped out by fine performances by all it's always fun to see LaRue as a ruthless gangster. 16mm. M294
MEN OF SAN QUENTIN* (1942, PRC) J. Anthony Hughes.

Eleanor Stewart, Charles Middleton, Dick Curtis. Hughes is a prison

Eleanor Stewart, Charles Middleton, Dick Curtis. Hughes is a prison guard who's targeted as a fall guy in an inner-prison conspiracy masterminded by corrupt guard Middleton. Charlie's soo good at playing a total jerk. A nitty PRC prison epic. From 16mm. M295 MURDER AT 3 A.M. (1953, Renown) Dennis Price, Peggy Evans. Philip Saville, Greta Mayaro. A horrible murder is committed early in the morning. A police inspector daningly uses his own sister to help trap the culprit. Short, sweet, and creepy. From 16mm. M296 IT TAKES A THIEF* (1960) Jayne Mansfield, Anthony Quayle, Carl Mohner. One heliusy crime film. Quayle is the money trapscort.

One helluva crime film. Quayle is the money transport man for a big robbery gone bad. He's arrested soon after hiding the cash, but keeps its location secret while in prison, convinced that his boss (Mansfield) has betrayed him. After prison, he makes for the loot, but Jayne's hoodiums are close at hand. A great film! 16mm. M297

THE TORTOISE (1964) Hildegarde Kneff, Gotz George The nephew of a murdered millionaire decides to track down his uncle's killer. He faces many life-threatening dangers as he tries to break into the inner circle of "The Tortoise." From 16mm. M298

DO YOU KNOW THIS VOICE? (1964) Dan Duryea, Gwen Watford, Isa Miranda. A great murder mystery. The only clue to a mad killer's identity is his shoes! The crime's only witness saw them while she was bent over picking something up. Duryea is fantastic as the "nice guy next door" who just happens to be a homicidal maniac. A great twist ending. A gem. highly recommended. From 16mm. M299

great twist ending. A gem...highly recommended. From 16mm. M299 DESPERATE MOMENTS (1970) Frank Wolff, Fernando Rey, Julian Mateos. Obviously inspired by The Desperate Hours, but in its own way it's almost as good. Wolff plays a mad criminal who breaks into the home of the judge who convicted him with plans for revenge. A grim war of nerves ensues. A tremendous hallucinatory scene will put you on the edge of your seat. Recommended. Color, 16mm. M300



Phyllis Kirk takes charge of the 3-D camera for this PK: I didn't have any HOUSE OF WAX publicity photo.

PHYLLIS KIRK

Continued from page 54

SS: Why did Buttons go through so many different actresses?

PK: Well, Red is very particular, and if he thinks something isn't working, he says

so. On a couple of occasions, I suppose, it just wasn't working.

SS: In a fondly-remembered TWILIGHT ZONE episode with Keenan Wynn, you played his shrewish wife. Did you enjoy playing that kind of role?

PK: Oh, sure, that was great fun. Keenan Wynn played a writer who made up characters who in some instances came to life. And what he would do if he wanted to get rid of a character was he would just throw the dictation tape in the fireplace. The feeling you get in the film is that he made me up to begin with, and ultimately he stayed with the blonde woman he made up and threw me in the fireplace! SS: That was the first TWI-LIGHT ZONE episode in which Rod Serling appeared on camera as opposed to being a disembodied voice. Did you

work with him on the set? scenes with him, but I knew Rod very well. I had

worked with him in New York.

SS: Earlier you mentioned your difficulty in walking.

PK: I had a very slight case of polio when I was little, and they think that probably was part of it. And I'm still having the

same difficulty. As a matter of fact, most of the time I'm in a wheelchair. But I'm okay, I'm fine.

SS: At what point did you stop acting?

PK: Well, I stopped acting when I was not walking properly, and no one could really find out what, precisely, was wrong with me. I decided that I would just not even try to find out. I would go on as best I could. What I did, finally, in the seventies, was start a second career as a public relations executive. I did that for a few years for a PR firm out here, and from there I went to CBS network out here, as the publicist in charge of CBS NEWS. I did that for several years, and when I retired in 1992, that was it.

SS: Did any acting offers come in during your second career?

PK: Not really, because most of the people in this town knew that I had done what I did, and I was walking with a cane. There aren't too many parts for actresses who walk with a cane.

SS: You've said that Nora Charles was a favorite part of yours, but do you have a favorite among your films?

PK: Well, I probably would, now, laughingly, have to say HOUSE OF WAX. When I saw it on cable the other night, I was pleasantly surprised. I watched it without any of the baggage that I brought to the first showings of it. Well, how was I to know it would turn out to be the movie I'm most remembered for doing? If I'd known, I wouldn't have complained about making it so much! It's really a very good film.

SS: And you're very good in it.

PK: Oh, bless your heart! (Laughs)

SCREEN AND SCREEN AGAIN

Continued from page 29

topher Lee, looking like a badly-colorized NÎGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD zombie) celebrates its birthday by trying to strangle Daddy. The Creature is subdued, and Victor, unable to see past the successful reanimation, decides he can solve the problem by repairing the brain. Sounds reasonable.

The Creature breaks free in the night, and escapes into the woods, where it takes its first human life-an old blind man. Victor enlists Paul to help track the monster down, and when they find it, Paul is all too happy to shoot it in the eye. ("I've done what had to be done.") But when you're dealing with an undead monster in the hands of an obsessed madman, a mere bullet in the eye is not sufficient reason to close up shop. Indeed, the Creature is back up and running in no time. Victor is determined to repair the brain and tame the beast, but his creation seems to have its own agenda—a serious score to settle with all things living

Rather than rehashing the tragic tale of a monstrous outcast, Jimmy Sangster's script focuses on the tragic obsession of the creator—not a necessarily evil fellow, just driven to evil by his relentless quest for knowledge and truth. Unlike Karloff's

sympathetic, frightened Monster in James Whale's FRANKENSTEIN, Lee's Creature is nearly devoid of personality, and exists only to horrify and destroy. To set it further apart from the 1931 Universal classic, Hammer's presentation of the tale is extremely serious in tone, having none of the dark humor found in Whale's version.

Under the direction of soon-to-be Hammer horrormeister Terence Fisher, Hammer managed to produce a fresh, scary, and fully worthwhile interpretation of The Modern Prometheus, and its box-office success spawned a myriad of Hammer sequels, ranging from ambitious to abysmal. With this film, Cushing established himself as the Baron Frankenstein of the Hammer world (the following year he would additionally establish himself as the Dr. Van Helsing of the same world); his excellent turn as the moody scientist is alternately cold and explosively emotional. The supporting cast is top-notch (Melvyn Hayes particularly stands out as the condescending 15-yearold Victor), and the set design far surpasses the film's relatively low budget (though the walls of the Frankenstein manor look like brick-print wallpaper in some shots).

Warner's disc holds an excellent, colorful transfer of the film, accurately matted at 1.85:1, with very few instances of speckling. One only wishes they had thrown a theatrical trailer onto the end,



as the film's 83-minute running time more than allowed for it, but don't let this minor quibble stop you from adding this gem to your collection.

-Tony Strauss



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WANTED: PHOTOS OF ROBERT QUARRY on stage, especially his performance in LION IN WINTER. Contact: Kevin G. Shinnick, 222 Washington Place #2, Cliffside Park, NJ 07010

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NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 21

soon on three new CDs due in the coming year. Included on the new discs: music from THE ALLIGATOR PEOPLE, THE ANIMAL WORLD, MIGHTY JOE YOUNG (1949), 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH, and MGM's series of TARZAN films. Also included will be previously unavailable music from CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON. These discs are labors of love, and Scarlet listeners will doubtless love 'em back.

Hammer Film fans can turn their computer's desktop into a pint-sized Shepperton Studios when they visit the "Hammer Horrors Desktop Themes and Screen Savers" website (www.angelfire. com/md/hammerhorror). Lush images from favorite films in the Frankenstein, Dracula, and Karnstein series can be downloaded as wallpaper, icon designs, startup screens, and more. But be warned: if you double-click on Ingrid Pitt, be prepared for a byte or two.

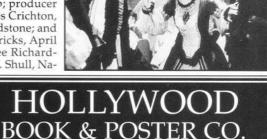
Gone, but never to be forgotten: humorist Jean Shepherd; sci-fi/fantasy novelist Marion Zimmer Bradley, novelist Joseph Heller; actor/singer/songwriter Hoyt Axton; actor/songwriter Terry

Gilkyson; singer Ella Mae Morse; voice actor Mary Kay Bergman; special effects artists Bob McCarthy, John Stears and Albert Whitlock; producer/screenwriter Ivan Goff; composer Frank DeVol; writer/ actor/raconteur Quentin Crisp; producer Charles Lowe; directors Charles Crichton, Josesph Green, and James Goldstone; and actors Ian Bannen, Dean Fredericks, April Kent, Bernadette O'Farrell, Lee Richardson, George C. Scott, Richard B. Shull, Na-

omi (Mrs. Alistair) Sim, Glenn Vernon, Helen Vinson, Grace McDonald, Dick Patterson, Billy Benedict, Bethel Leslie, John Archer, Marilyn Harris, Beatrice Colen, and the wonderful Miss Madeline Kahn.

Send questions, comments and compliments via e-mail to TheNews Hound @yahoo.com.





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CRACKS IN THE MASK

Continued from page 37

Four years after his death, and even after writing *Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography,* Victoria still regrets the difficulties she encountered in maintaining a relationship with her father and the doors that remained closed between them, even after Coral Browne died of cancer in 1991. In her book, she relates a conversation late in Price's life:

"I remember coming into his bedroom one afternoon during those last years . . . He seemed preoccupied . . . And then he said, 'I couldn't sleep last night, so I turned on the telly, and I found myself watching one of those made-for-TV movies. There was this young man in it, and slowly I started to realize that I could identify with him. And when the movie was over, I thought to myself that his problem had been my problem, too, my whole life, and that if I were only younger I might be able to work it out' . . . And when he stopped speaking, I felt the space between us both loom and shrink. A hundred responses formed in my head, but I couldn't even ask the most basic question—what problem did you both have?"

Reminded of the encounter now, Victoria downplays its importance. "I know what he talked about when he was upset or proud, and I know what he talked about during his more maudlin moments. It wasn't something that needed to be said. It was the kind of deepening of understanding that very rarely comes between parent and child. It's something you're more likely to get with your own partner or peer. What was difficult was that we had this incredible bond from the time that I was very little, and it was difficult to maintain as I grew up and as he grew up. Even though we really liked each other, as people with almost a fairy tale connection, we couldn't necessarily stand up to the rigors of an adult friendship. If you think about it, it's a lot easier to connect with people if you do it on a part-time basis. And it's a lot easier to be viewed a certain way the less time you spend with the kids. The more time you spend with the kids, the more likely they are to dislike you for certain reasons, whereas if you're not always there you become kind of an image to them. You represent something. And you know, I expect he still does, in a way '



Vincent Price and Phyllis Kirk take a break during the filming of HOUSE OF WAX (1953). Phyllis is dressed for the scene in which Professor Jarrod (Price) imagines Sue Allen (Kirk) as his wax figure of Marie Antoinette.

THE THIN MAN

Continued from page 67

do, and if it's all the same to you I'm going to go right on existing! Don't you dare touch my corporeal envelope!"

Another pleasure in watching vintage TV shows is the pleasant surprise of old friends popping up as guest stars.

Such was censorship on TV in the fifties that Nick and Nora Charles (Peter Lawford and Phyllis Kirk) weren't allowed to sleep in the same bed. Asta, however, was allowed to bedhop.



The episode "Nora Goes Over the Wall," for instance, features future horror star Robert (Count Yorga) Quarry as a Most Likely Suspect.

In *The Peter Lawford Story*, John Newland claimed that Lawford disliked Phyllis Kirk so much that it was written into his contract that he didn't have to touch her. ("Particularly because of this imposition of no physical contact, there were moments that were very tricky to get around. And his adroitness at getting away from her physically was really something to see. Like Fred Astaire, dancing.")

Yes, it must have been something to see, if it was there to see—but it isn't. Lawford seems never to have held his producers to that bargain. In the six episodes sampled for this article (including "Beatnik Murder," directed by Newland), there isn't a single instance in which Lawford and Kirk don't touch. Nor is it just fleeting contact: they hold hands, they hug, they kiss.

Just like Nick and Nora Charles

MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM

Continued from page 44

create a character, while Price and his cohorts trade on the actor as a personality (though Price wasn't really a full-fledged horror star until he made this very film). There is nothing inherently wrong with this—it works quite well within its limited range—but it makes for less of a film. As a result, MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM seems very much the better, the more complete, accomplishment, at least in this corner.

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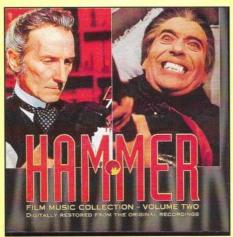




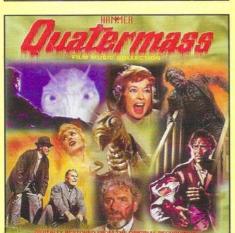
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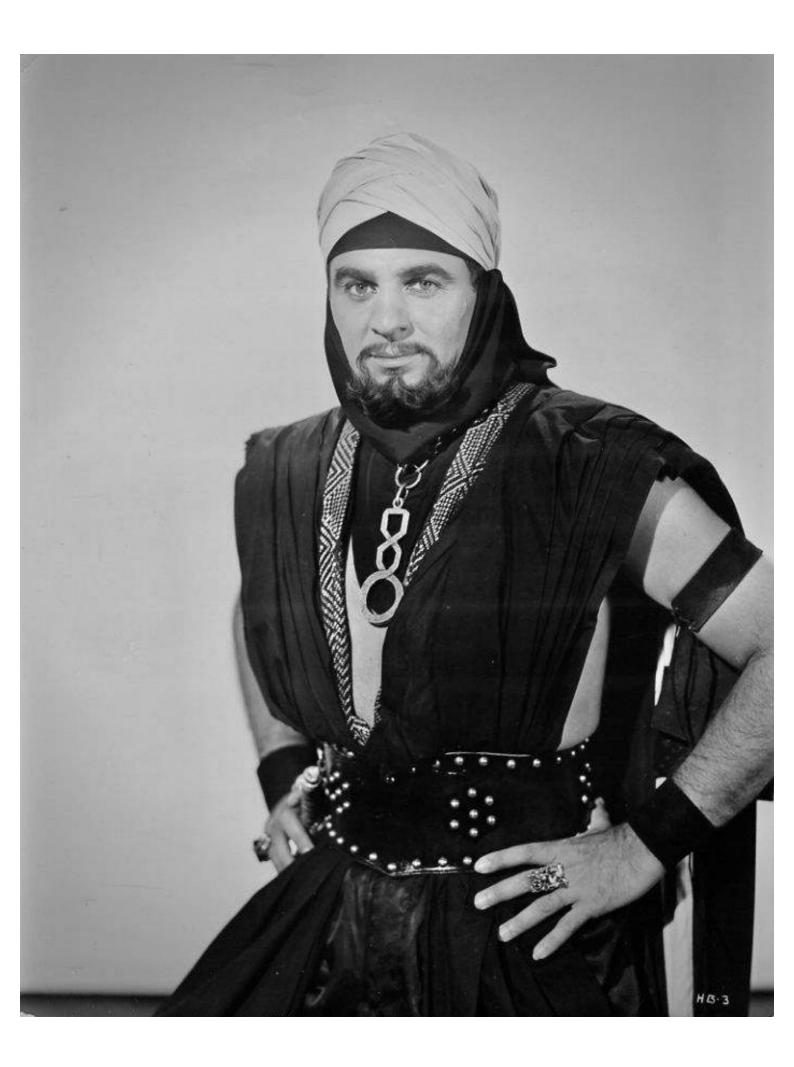
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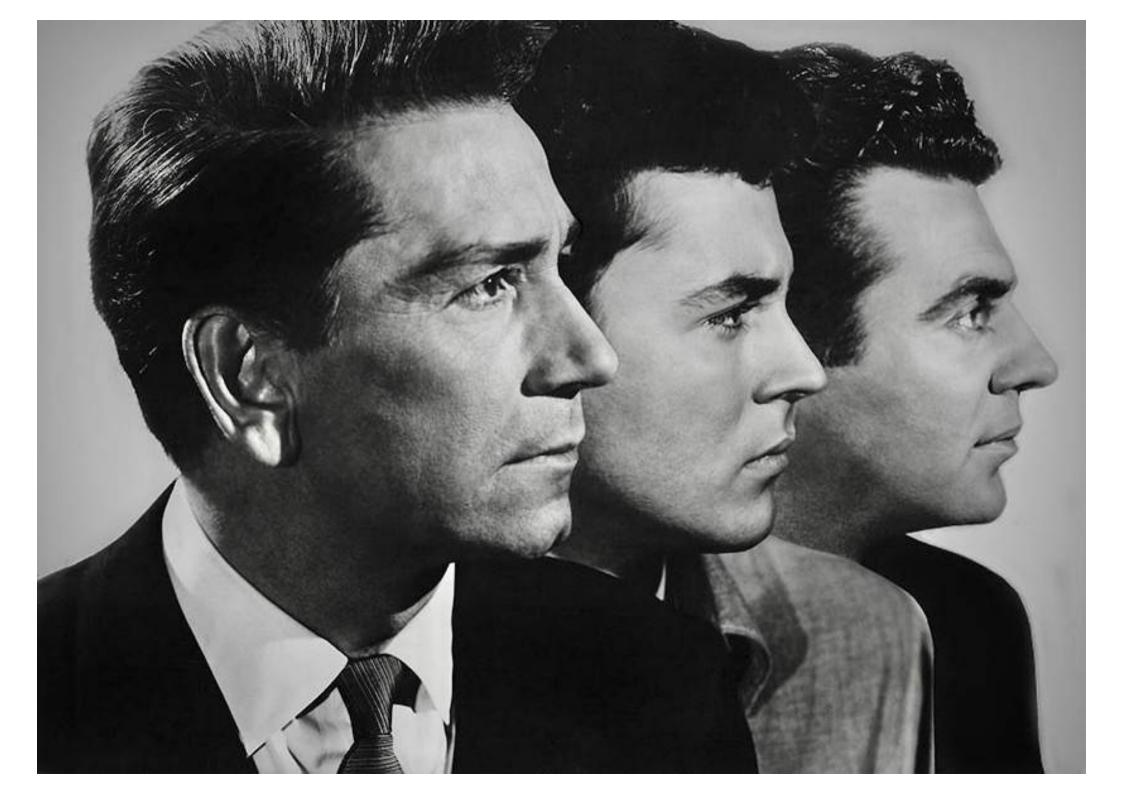


























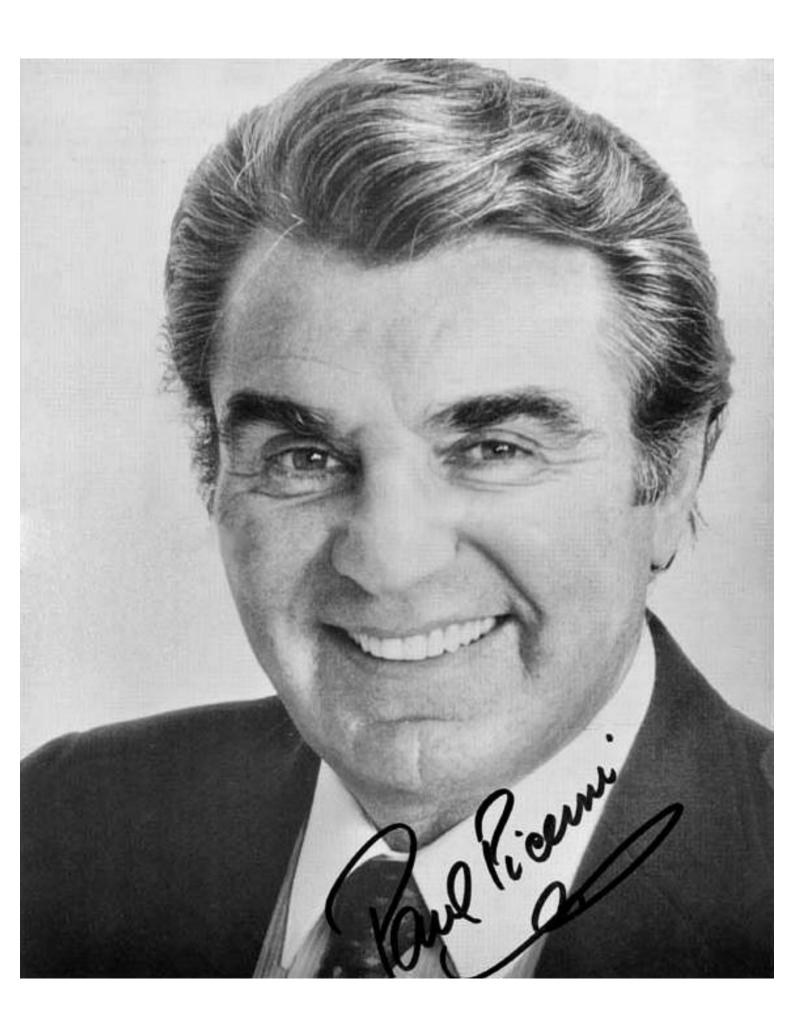




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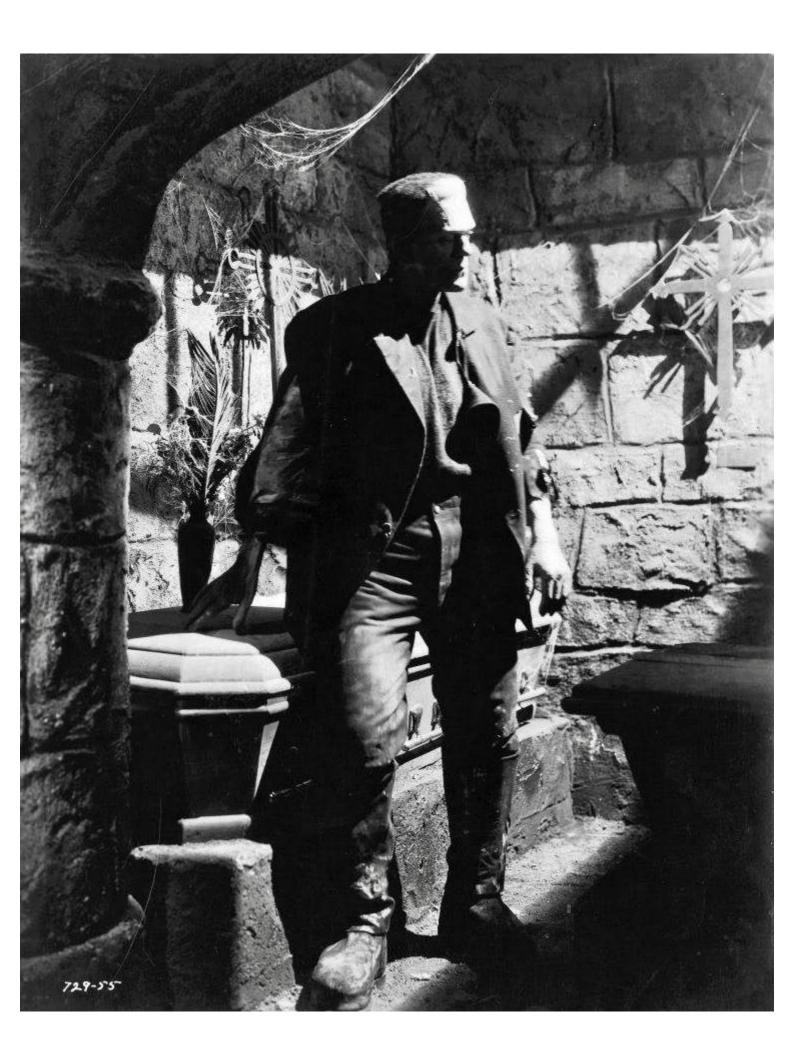


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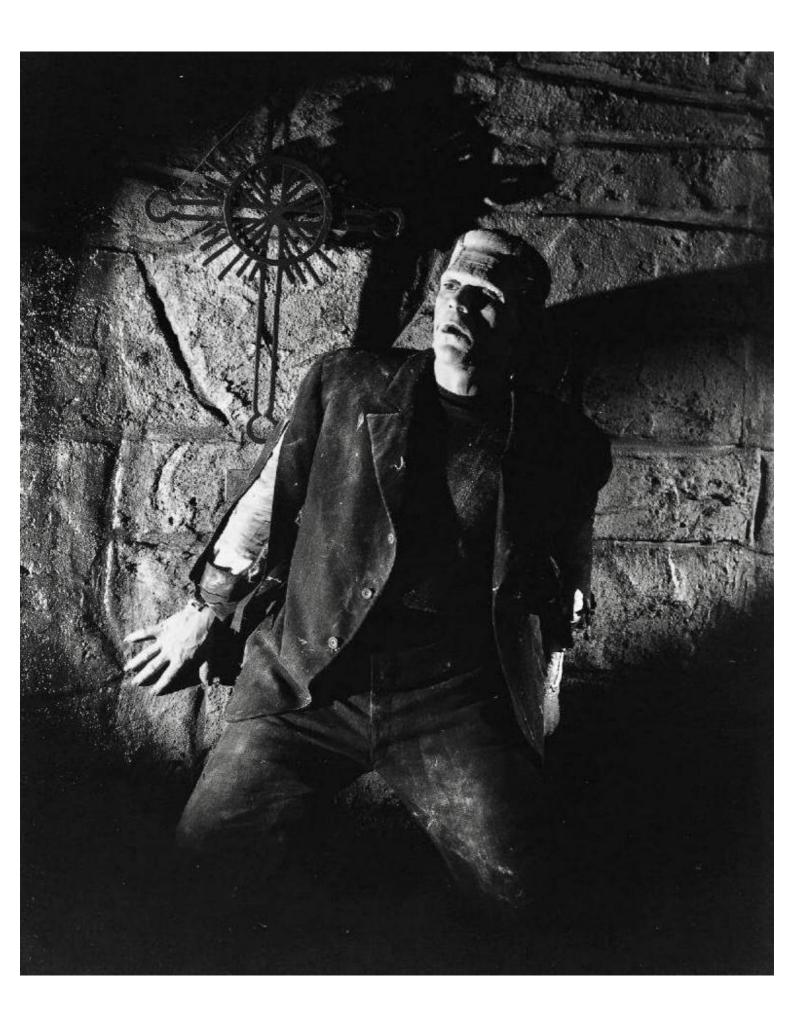




































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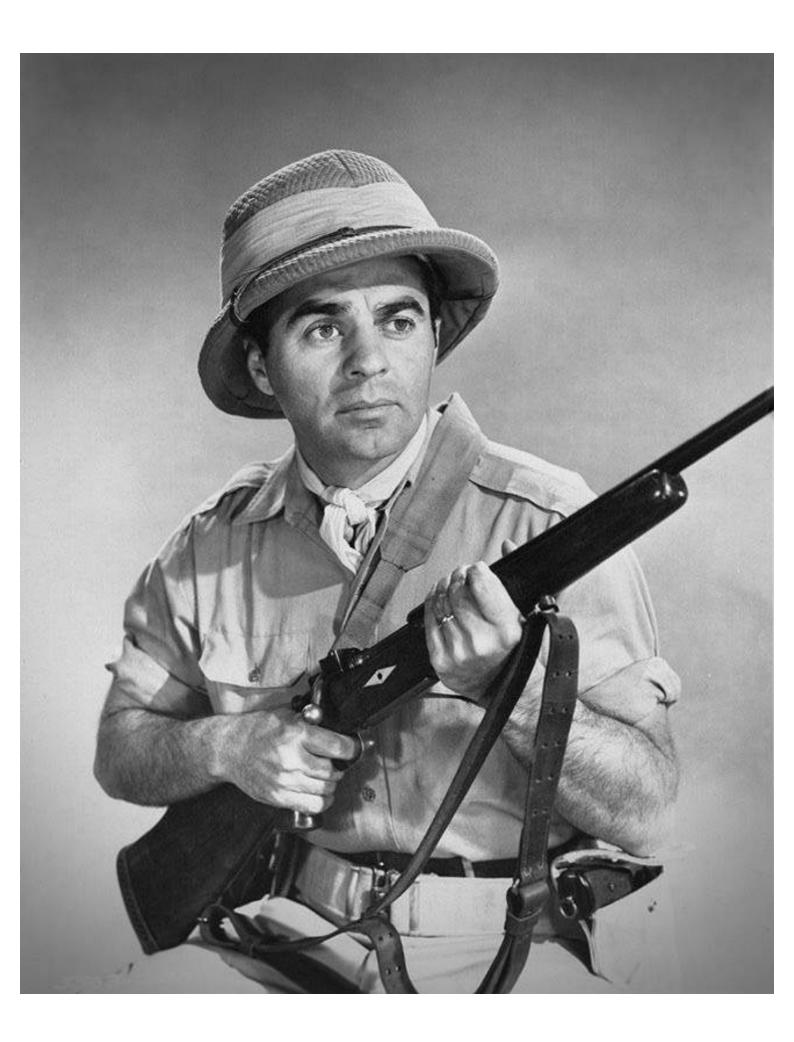
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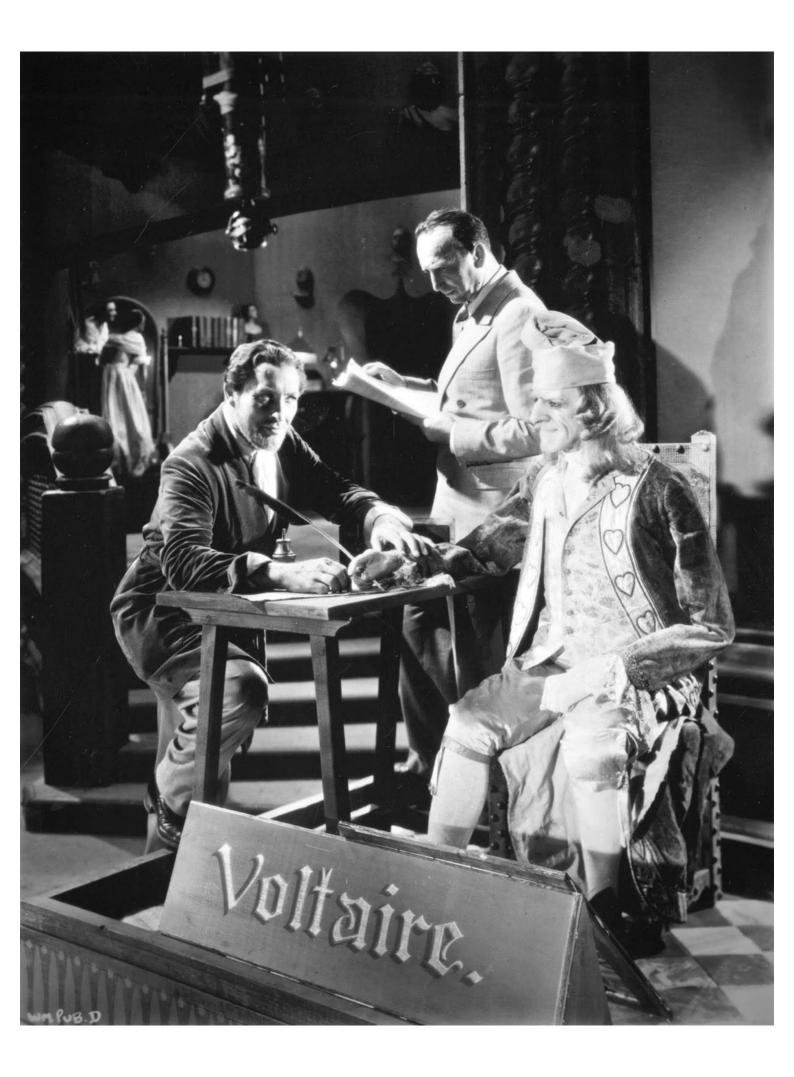


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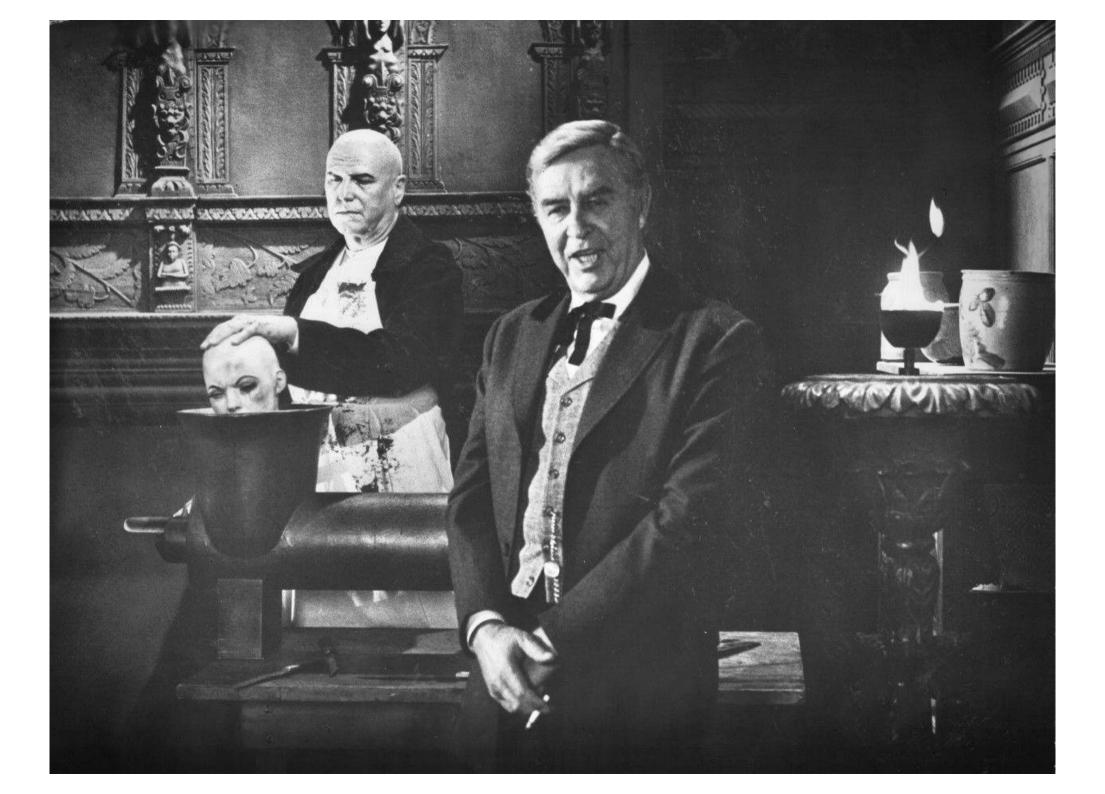


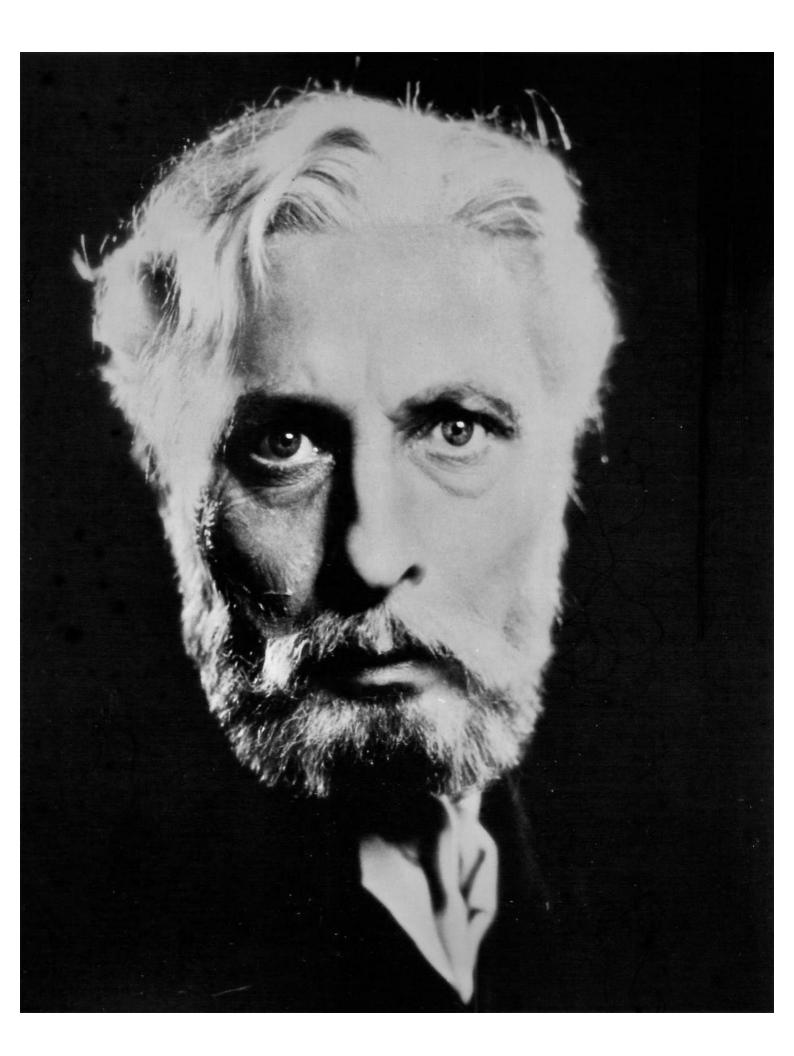


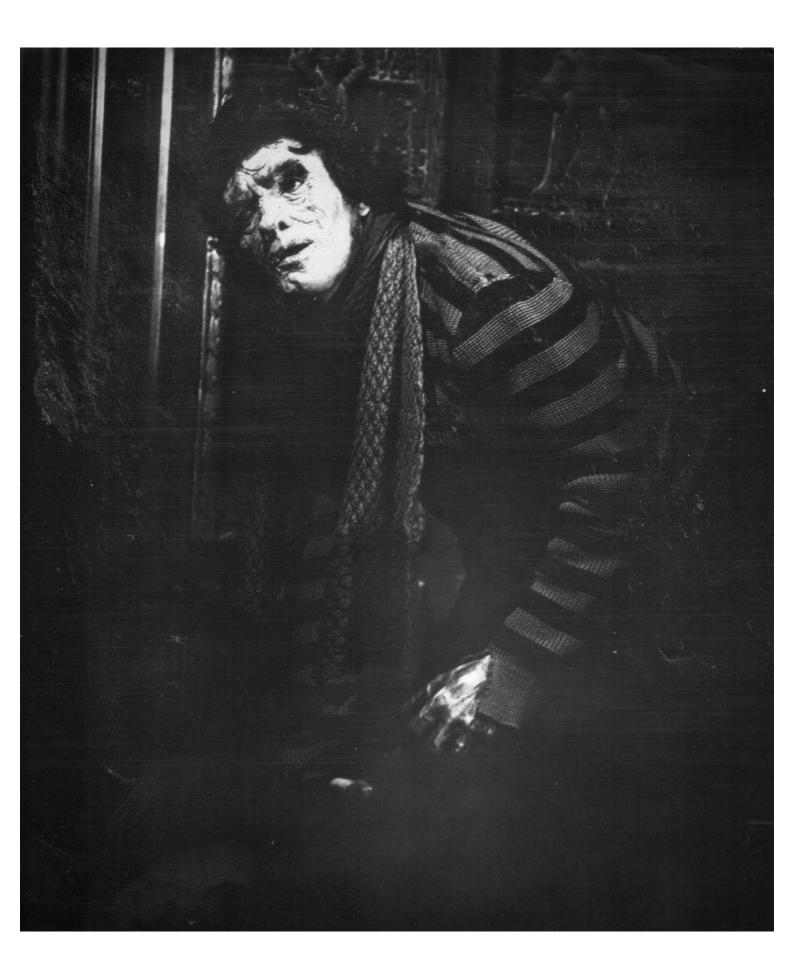






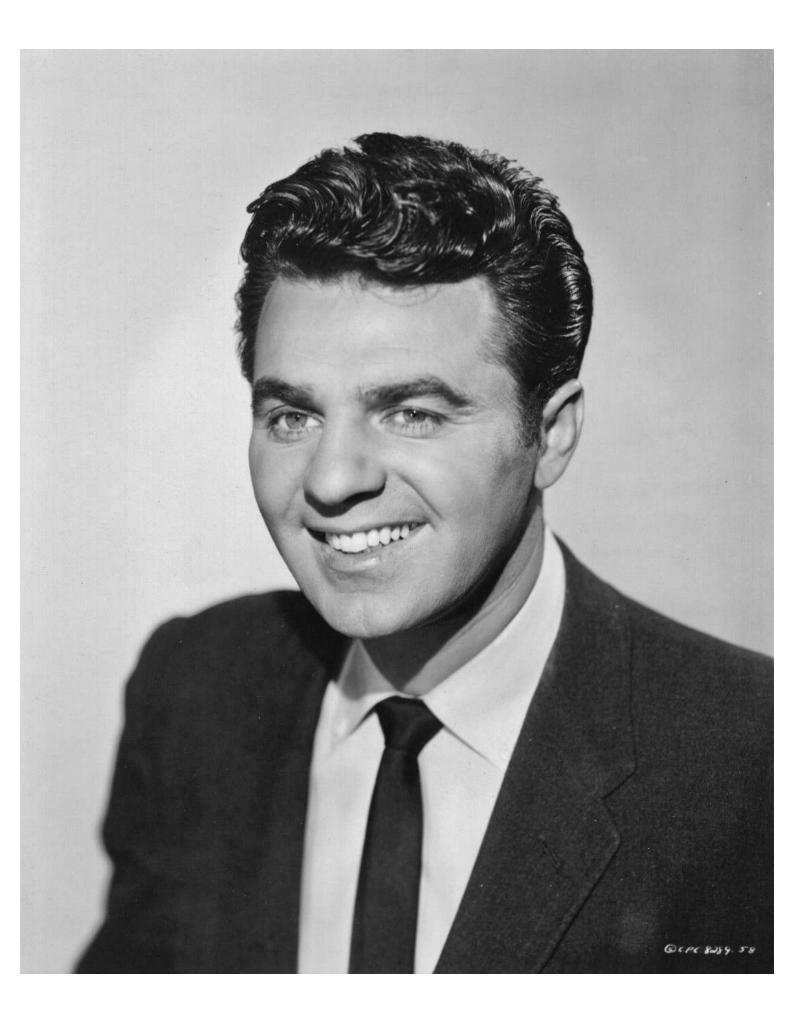






















CAST	
Harry Flexner	RAY MILLAND
Amos Burns BRODERIC	
Julia Hawthorn ELSA I	
Inspector Daniels MAI	
Laurie Mell S	
Claude Dupree JOHN	CARRADINE
Tim Fowley LO	JIS HAYWARD
Mr. Southcott PATI	
Sergeant Michael Hawks MARK	
Madame Yang	
Karkoff	EVEN MARLO
First Constable	
First Charwoman MATI	
Second Charwoman PEC	
Constable ParkerLESL	
MegNIC	
1 FARE U.S CONTROL STATE CO.	

WAX	FI	GU	R	ES

										DON HERBERT
										. JUDY WETMORE
										. JO WILLIAMSON
										GEORGE FARINA
										DIANE WAHRMAN
										RICKIE WEIR
							i	R	A	LPH CUNNINGHAM
t.										DON WILLIAMSON
	 		 							RA:

CREDITS

J.1.2511.5	
Executive Producer	CHARLES A. PRATT
Produced By	
Directed By	
Screenplay By	JAMESON BREWER
Music By	
Story By	ANDREW J. FENADY
Director Of Photography W	ILLIAM JURGENSEN
Production Designer	STAN JOLLEY
Film Editor	
Unit Production Manager and Asst. Director .	FLOYD JOYER
Make-up Created By	JACK H. YOUNG
Set Decorator	CARL BIDDISCOMBE
Costumes	OSCAR RODRIGUEZ
	VOU LEE GIOKARIS
Color By	DELUXE

A FENADY ASSOCIATES PRODUCTION

In Association With

BCP PRODUCTIONS
A Service Of COX BROADCASTING

RUNNING TIME: 90 minutes

MPAA RATING: "PG"

Distributed by CINERAMA RELEASING

ACCESSORIES

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PRESSBOOK (YOUR SHOWMANSHIP CAMPAIGN

TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM

Basic Sell: This is a "PG" rated film and will have great appeal to young people and kids. Therefore, the campagn is tailored to reach this audience, particularly with vacation time on hand.

The character of Karkoff has become a major element in the sell. "Karkoff is here in the wax museum . . . you can't tell the living from the dead." The visual then shows the famous killers of history who may . . . or not . . . be alive in the wax museum. Also, the names of the cast are in clear type so that they can give a size and prestige to the overall impact.

Print: You can begin with the small "Karkoff is coming" teasers which will work best when they can be put on top of a circuitstack. Stay with small units until day before or opening day and then come in with your full sell. Wherever possible, open on a Friday to concentrate your campaign. Buy your mass newspapers primarily.

TV: A 60, 30, and 20 available at NSS. The 60 is full sell and should be used for the main in-advance spots starting the weekend before you open. Hit your Chiller Theaters, horror-suspense shows, some late night movies. However, put your biggest buy into youngster's TV... for the 10-15 year-olds... re-runs of Hogan's Heroes, Flintstones, Lucy, etc. For this, the 20 is a Karkoff spot and should be completely acceptable for daytime and early evening programming. If you can drop in the 30 and the 60, fine, but you may be limited to the 20 for kids programming.

Also, b shows that teenagers watch . . . the "Midnight Special," in Concert type shows. For these run the 60 or 30.

Radio: A 30 available at NSS. Buy rock, top 40o radio and some black radio. Use radio very close to opening and into the weekend.

Trailer and Cross-Plug: Available at NSS. Remember, the x-plug is yours free if you have a contract or spot booking with NSS. This is the best possible sell for the picture. Put it on as many screens as you can as soon as you have a hint of a booking. Since it's a PG film, you can show the trailer and cross-plug everywhere.

Promotion: Famous Stars who played Grotesque and Horror characters. In keeping with the Karkoff angle, run a contest to identify the stars and the characters they played. They are all famed horror heroes from Frankenstein's Monster to the Hunchback of Notre Dame. You can offset the photo montage (also available as a mat) and run it via a theater herald. Or you can tie-in with a store. Put a blowup in the window and invite people to come into the store to enter. Since most film buffs and horror-suspense fans will know most of these, you can do a drawing for top prize among those who got all the right answers.



ANSWERS:

- 1. Bela Lugosi
- Karkoff (played by Steve Marlo from "Terror in Wax Museum")
- 3. Frederick March
- 4. Boris Karloff
- 5. Michael Landon
- 6. Rondo Hatton
- 7. Lon Chaney, Sr.
- 8. Lon Chaney, Jr.

Special Mat - 2B

WHICH ONE IS KARKOFF? Karkoff joins the ranks of Hollywood's greatest movie monsters in TERROR IN THE WAX MUSEUM, the new BCP Productions horror-suspense thriller from Cinerama Releasing, In this line-up of Boris Karloff, Rondo Hatton, Lon Chaney Sr., Michael Landon, Lon Chaney Jr., Bela Lugosi and Fredric March. Can you identify each character?











